

URL: <https://stvp.stanford.edu/blog/videos/designing-from-values-entire-talk>

Sharon Prince is the CEO and founder of Grace Farms Foundation, a new kind of boundary-defying public space in New Canaan, Connecticut, that has become widely known as a global humanitarian and cultural center. Grace Farms is the platform for the Foundation and its interdisciplinary humanitarian mission to pursue peace through nature, arts, justice, community, faith, and Design for Freedom, a global new movement to eliminate forced labor from the building materials supply chain. In this presentation, Prince explains the origin and possibilities of the Design for Freedom movement and shares how she designed Grace Farms to embody her vision and values.



## Transcript

(lighthearted music) - Welcome everybody 00:00:17,130 to the Entrepreneur Thought Leader Seminar at Stanford University, which is a seminar for aspiring students.... Aspiring founders at Stanford.. ETL, or the 'Entrepreneur Thought Leader' seminar is presented by 'STVP', the 'Stanford Engineering Entrepreneurship Center' and 'BASIS', the 'Business Association of Stanford Entrepreneurial Students'.. I am Ravi Belani, a lecturer in the Management Science & Engineering department at Stanford, and the Director of Alchemist & Accelerator for enterprise startups.. Today, I have the pleasure of welcoming Sharon Prince to ETL.. You know, we wanted to kick off this spring with a true catalyst for change, and we couldn't be more happy, than to have Sharon kick off this spring quarter.. Sharon Prince is the CEO and Founder of 'Grace Farms Foundation', which is a new kind of boundary, defining public space in New Canaan Connecticut that has become widely known as a global humanitarian, and cultural center.. Grace Farms is the platform for the foundation, and it's interdisciplinary humanitarian mission to pursue peace through nature, arts, justice, community, faith, and design for freedom.. A global new movement to eliminate forced labor from the building materials supply chain.. Since opening, Grace Farms has garnered numerous prestigious awards for contribution to architecture, environmental sustainability, and social good, including the 'AIA' National 2017 Architecture Honor Award, and the Mies Crown Hall America's Prize..

Sharon also co-founded Grace Farms Foods, which offers coffees and teas that demonstrate what the foundation advocates for, ethical, and sustainable supply chains.. And I think there may be some that you guys all are gonna get, you can be the beneficiaries of tasting some, which is in the back of the room here.. And for those that are in 178, you're gonna get even some more privileged gifts.. And 100% of the profits from Grace Farms Foods supports the 'Design for Freedom' movement, to eliminate forced labor from the building materials supply chain, and the construction industry.. In recognition of Sharon's impactful work, Fast Company has named her to its list of the 'Most Creative People in Business 2022', for cleaning up construction, and the 'AIA' New York & Center for Architecture recognized her for the NYC, the New York City Visionary Award.. Please join me everybody, in welcoming Sharon Prince.. (audience applauding) - Thank you.. 00:02:41,738 Thank you.. (audience clapping) Hello, it is such an honor to open your ETL series, with you Ravi, and all of your.... All you art, engineering, and entrepreneurial students, who are really thinking about how to create new things..

And as you can think about architecture, which is inherently creating new things.. What is so surprising, fascinating, and under-realized is the power, the enormous power of architecture, to drive new outcomes, and even humanitarian outcomes..

As a fellow entrepreneur, I think of architecture as a three-dimensional expression of a vision, and the.... One other thing is that you think about architecture, space, and I do believe, does communicate.. So, you start to wrestle with this idea, the 'What does space communicate?' And also you know, can it embed values into space? Can you do that? Can it be generative over 100 years? You know, what can it do? Well, I'm gonna share with you, three, three creations that are all starting with a place, it is Grace Farms.. This is Grace Farms, it is like you said, situated on 80-acres, one of the first things was to preserve the land that was to be broken up.. And then, from this, you'll see the river building, it's a porous building, it also tests the limits of engineering innovations, which I'll get into, but also creates proximities, and in terms of creating proximities, that includes peoples, sectors, and the whole concept to advance good in the world, through nature, arts, justice, community, and faith, actually worked on me.. Because our investment in architecture to do just this, and our commitment in terms of justice, really create an epiphany for me, that initialized the design for Freedom Movement.. And the other aspect is of like.... Okay, now that you know, you can't un-know it, now I have to think about all the materials, are we using what we into site now? 'Cause that epiphany happened after the whole concept was....

Before we built Grace Farms.. So, those teas, and coffees are the other avenue, it was my co-founder, to demonstrate what we're advocating for, and that is ethical, and sustainable supply chains.. So now, I remember starting off as an entrepreneur, like you, I was in college, just many years ago, I was at the University of Tulsa, I was putting myself through school, and I was the graduate assistant, in what was a new entrepreneurial studies apartment.. Dr.. Hisrich was a Rose Scholar, and was the foremost expert on entrepreneurship, he had just written a book on women entrepreneurs.. I was like, "Wow.. Okay, gender parity, it's coming, it's right here." Not so much, this is almost.... More than 30 years ago, right? And this is what I've been working on too, gender and racial parity, being able to do that.. So, part of the concept that I employ in terms of being an entrepreneur, is being immersed, it's a little different than being passionate, and obsessed, which yes, probably like you am that too.. But emersion is necessarily present, and active, and when you're immersed, you start to see the....

Is the gaps in society that you might want to be able to address, you also see opportunities, and when you're immersed, you're also enveloped, in a way that you're creating all the senses, right? That you can start to see connections.. So, I found my.... This is me at Stanford 30 years ago, this is the first time I'm at Stanford, and if you can see there, it is the 1994 World Cup, it's my first soccer match, so you can tell I'm really all-in, even though it's my first soccer match.. And I had 36 hours to get here, so I said yes, you gotta be present, you gotta say yes and show up, I did that.. And I happen to also be an outdoor adventurer, so I love to drive fast, and I started let's say.... I think it's.... So, I started at six years old, water skiing, about seven or eight riding dirt bikes, and still have my motorcycle license, and this is Iceland, back in 2003.. So, now a decade later in Iceland, I thought about, "Oh, it's so exciting to be able to like go full-throttle on a glacier." Go full-throttle on a snow mobile, and at the same time, you could dip into a hot spring.. Well, at that time, I got there, I was like, "Oh my gosh, this is like..." Most of what you saw at that time was very boxy, North Face, no ads with women in it, and this is what I saw when I got to Iceland at that time, so cool, right? But what I also saw back here in the United States on the right, is an advertisement that I literally just found preparing for this, the same magazine that when I did get the brand, I got the brand of 66°North, brought to the United States, I got the North American distribution rights, and just love this, because introducing the winter collection, also known as a summer collection.. And at that time, I brought it into the United States, it was in Urban Outfitters, Paragon Sports, a little bit of fashion, also, Paragon Sports being a very outdoor-active place..

And then, what you see on the right is what I was dealing with, right? It is.... Let's see, if you can read, "Bring warmth to cold places, ex-girlfriends not included." Okay? That's not exactly what I wanted to see, so you know, trying to fill those gaps.. And also, when you're an entrepreneur, you're scrappy, of course you're scrappy, you gotta figure.... You have no budget, you have no.... You're figuring out what to do.. Well, when I brought the brand to the United States, I just called up 'The Wall Street Journal', did not have a PR firm, called them up said, "I'm bringing this brand to the United States." They did assign a reporter, the reporter came with me for four days, and I mean, fantastic, right? Well, not so much either, as you know, there's a plethora of challenges that you're going to face, and in fact, I think it was probably infinite amount, but I.... What happens.... The way I think about it is that there's always gonna be a challenge in the day, and then, I look for the good news of the day, that literally has been my practice for 17 years, just every, single day.. In this case, it was a bit more of a challenge than I thought, 'cause I was really, really riding high on this idea that I was bringing The Wall Street Journal reporter, they sold out the company, I did not own the company, I got the North American distribution rights, did not own the company, they sold it out from underneath me, I had the right of first refusal in my contract, and yet, I'm not Icelandic, so they sold it.. Now, I have a choice, it's the day before I'm literally getting on the plane, I have a choice to file a breach of contract, lawsuit, or do I make sure I get into the headquarters now, and bring The Wall Street Journal reporter with all that I'd invested in? So, what happens? I got the report, and I did do both..

So, now I.... The next stage is to developing retail stores, and the architect friend of mine, he was helping.... Or helping to develop these retail stores, are about to now roll out retail stores, and the SoHo store went so well, it was actually profitable, think about a pop-up store for three months, for a couple of months, profitable.. Crazy, right? Had a dance party basically in SoHo, with Icelandic DJs, it was really fun.. And okay, this is now 2007, only problem is, I did not own the full.... (Sharon speaking softly) Also did not own the brand, did not have a margin, the terrace went up, didn't have a margin, that was.... That eliminated the possibility for me to stay in that company, so I divested.. Good news of the day, is that Iceland, that, not good for Iceland, but good for me, divesting when I did, is that Iceland went bankrupt, how often does that happen, okay? So, I can.... I can tell you 1,000 stories like this that are just crazy, right? But what I did adopt from that, and without 66°North, I would not have created Grace Farms, there's no way, because this concept of Space Communicates, is derived from that.. It's

also about experiencing nature with awe, and wonder, there are so many aspects, including the owners project manager that I hired, that was a colleague, through this process too, and he was the one that had built Guggenheim Bilbao, didn't answer my calls originally, but then we started working together as sort of like his 'pet project', and so, now of course his favorite..

So, the concepts that I want you to really think about, again, is that architecture space is a 3D expression of a vision, and it does, even if you're unconsciously doing so, it still expresses a vision.. And, we now have this opportunity to reimagine architecture as a driver of humanitarian outcomes, and even to be this entrepreneurial platform.. All right, so here's the first expression of Grace Farms, it is a really cool expression, in fact, it won an 'AIA New York Merit Award for Un-built Work' and yet, my role as the entrepreneur is to mark, to market the vision, and how it's being expressed.. So, I had a 35-page program that was highly aspirational, and also utilitarian needs.. So, after two years of development, I had to abandon the project, because it did not achieve the goal.. That's very.... It's very tough to do.. However, knowing that this is gonna be a longterm project, went on a whole search to find the right architect now, that I'd get paired with.. This is an image of Sejima and Nishizawa of 'SANAA' in Japan, the reason why they were so perfect, and it was a long.... It was another process just in terms of selecting them, but they were never tethered to existing models, and what we're creating is a new kind of public place, there's not a place like this, that was not only in terms of form, but it terms of concept..

And so, they could think in that abstract way.. And you can see here too, that when we were.... It was eager process, so I am proposing concepts like, "We wanna create an environment where you are experiencing nature, where nature's in the foreground, and the buildings recedes." They took that further, you can see here that the building becomes part of the landscape.. And also, other things like, "We wanna create a place to invoke curiosity, new perspectives, create an individual experience, and a collective experience." And it just goes on, like, "Okay, very peaceful restbite, in an active community, diametrically opposed." And there was many of those.. So now, here we are, it's a equestrian.... Former equestrian site, and now we start to develop, I'll show you a couple of the images that allow you to see that we.... We retained two of the barns, so in terms of reuse, and remodeling, very effective in terms of design for freedom, because you start to truncate the supply chain of the extractives, reducing the risk of exploitation, and it ends up being the only opaque spaces that we had, which were very advantageous as well.. And then, we are.... Grace Farms is the only, only site in Connecticut that is both Lead Certified for how we built, and also, how we operate.. So, demonstrating....

(Sharon speaking softly) Is always in our mind, "Okay, how do we..." We of course decide to have a garden so we could have the produce, that we would also have on site, but also be able to donate, and as a place.. So, here we are, really again, immersed in nature, the arts, all these aspects that I was describing, one is to experience nature, two, encounter the arts, and 'the arts' meaning visual, performing, culinary, and so forth.. To pursue justice, this is Dr. (indistinct), Nobel Peace Prize Winner on the right, and Nicholas Kristof on the left.. And to foster community, this is actually the sanctuary at the top of the river, that you can see has no stairs, 'cause it makes it become part of the landscape.. Many aspects, it was.... Each chair is individually designed, the height of the stage is determined, so it becomes a more egalitarian space, and that you yeah, see into landscape.. Foster community, here is the commice, the center of the five glass-enclosed volumes, that you can see people not have to sit with each other the have a option, there's a few others on the side.. And you can see these tables were made from wood that was felled on site, that was part of the sustainable endeavor, but also, it by doing so, it also reduces human exploitation, 'cause we know our supply chain, and using locally fabricated materials in the United States, and actually if you know where they are, even where we are, it's advantageous.. And then, in terms of being able to advance good in the world, explore faith, because all faith backgrounds, You can start to examine you know, "How can we do this together from a faith-perspective?" And this image I love, because it shows you the hopeful space, where we're meant to, in terms of the space, being able to address pressing humanitarian issues..

So, we wanted to create a light-filled space, that had both spiritual potential, and social potential.. And you can see here, there's many diving interventions that happen along the way.. So, now the process, what is a process in terms of creating, that you can apply to many of the.... Of the creations you're involved in, and will be? It starts with not knowing, and also, it starts with creating many, many options.. So, this is in their studio in Japan, and what I love about this, is that there was never.... The answer was always, "We study." "We will study." Not an answer that you would.... Not a linear answer, and it was a really fun process to be going back and forth with them iteratively, but also they adopt.... They have the same way of being in terms of being immersed.. So, after we selected the River Building, it wasn't called the 'River Building', it was actually the solution to a set of.... You know, a set of requirements, architecture directive..

And part of.... We selected the River Building, I thought, "Okay, it's done." And no, it was like literally, many, many years, all the way up to the finish line while you're still iterating back and forth.. That image of the.... Of Teshima is in Japan where they said, "Okay now, go back out, and see some of our other projects." I'm now probably seeing 15, so that I can understand how they were interpreting that architecture.. Again, being immersed.. So, this is the interior, you see how it was situated on the hill, but the interior, this is a mind-blowing project, one art installation, and this is just opening when I took that picture.. And then, some other elements, so you start to think about materiality, and this is really intentional, it's not a very clear, it's more of a.... A blurred reflective space here, so everyone has their own entryway, their own entre in.. And then, this is a really important part of selecting them, is that I could see on the left, that this is as if you're walking out in nature, and you also can be having this experience altogether.. That long bench, I loved..

And then, on the right, the use of glass, super fascinating, but what I saw here is that the grass was green, and did not

quite love that, I still like the clarity.. And now the process.. So, this is a moment where I had to let Sejima and Nishizawa know that the order of operations, we'd already been two years now into development, about to go into construction documents, and as we're examining, I did not see a rendering for two years, so I really highly encourage something along those ways.... Along the way where you're not tethered to existing.... Materials that you're starting.... Like in here, you can see what we're doing is, I'm determining whether proximities are right, the atmospheric elements, not really concerned about whether that material, sure it comes later, but first, is the order of operations right? Are the.... And at first I thought, "When are we gonna see the rendering?" And now I realize, like that was elemental to producing the outcome.. And then, you'll see here too, that there are many iterations, and I can look at this as a art piece actually at Grace Farms that, that helps you see all the variations of all decision-making along the way.. But I did have to tell them that the order was out.... Was not according....

It was not achieving the goal, because the tonality was intended to be both peaceful, and active, but the way the volumes ended up being positioned, it was peaceful, they realize, "Oh it's active." "Peaceful/Active." Achieved many other goals, but it did not achieve that, so we had to switch those, and it was a huge deal to do that.. If you're in construction you'll know, it's like, "Not it.. Not a good day.. Had to re-engineer the whole roof." It took about six months to make that change, of just changing the order of the volumes.. But again, you really need to know, and be confident in your vision of what you're trying to create, and you have to articulate what beforehand, you can't.... You have to articulate the values you want to also embed, the team members that you want on your.... You know, you gotta be a part of your team, and I think that it was a really important way of being able to determine whether or not we were going to.... Okay, oh.. Okay, this other one too, I wanna show you, is that this is.... There's rarely a form of building like this, where it again becomes part of the landscape, but this elevation change afforded many of those aspirational ideas, just the elevation change..

So, that you have these site lines all along the river, you're also even curious, now if it's glass, like, "What's happening here?" "What's happening over there?" Verses opacity.. And I asked for an ambulatory experience because when you're moving, you're creating, you're creating new perspectives.. Okay, so I had the.... The whole.... Now we have the right order, the project's ready to go, we're about to go into construction, and low, and behold, another challenge.. There's many, this is just one of them, and this is.... Well, I really want green.... We definitely value green energy, we have 55 geothermal wells that power the River Building, I just didn't wanna see a landscape, a cell tower, 150ft with a windmill on top.. So, about 10 lawyers from a top communications company was coming in to make this happen, and there was state laws to proceed local, and I had to go up against 10 of those lawyers myself, so pay attention in your business law, definitely do, I use it all the time.. And what happened is that, just prior to that, one rendering, that one rendering did emerge, and Architects Newspaper identified Grace Farms as an architectural gem..

So, I used that in my defense, because that was one of the rulings that says, "If there's a treasured property, then those cell towers are not.... Have a way out." So, you have to be you know, always.... You're on deck is the point, you're gonna be on deck, so be prepared.. And then you go into building.. So now, prototyping, right? In architecture, it's one-to-one, these models, many models on-site determine whether this material is gonna reflect the sky, make the building become part of the landscape.. And now, the glass.. So, we spent two years also on glass, and the glass, now I go over to Shenzhen to take a look at the glass, here we are.. We have over 200 individually-curved in size glass panels, that need to be clear, in order to see the landscape.. And so, when I'm there, they were very excited, "This is it." And I let them know that, "No, it's no clear enough.. We're not gonna go through all this and not have clear glass." Their response, like literally top-glass folks, and actually, Michael Raw was here from front at Grace Farms, just a couple of weeks ago, and discussed it again..

What's interesting is that, we didn't create a new type of glass after that, 'cause that was pushing.... Literally, we were already at the limits of what we could do in terms of creating the glass system in the North-East, that would.... That would be able to withstand temperature, and had all the art-factors that we need.. So, we instead, Sejima and Nishizawa worked with everyone, and created.... And altered the design, so he extended the roof, and took off the laminate.. And so, therefore, with that simple solution, right? What I didn't realize until just a couple weeks ago, I forgot, is that by removing the laminate, you're now removing a containment, and now that glass can be recycled, it's not recycled right now, just so you know.. So, the flat glass right now is generally not recyclable because of those contaminants.. And so, not through recycling this, but you can see, like all these.... Some of these are just pushing up, asking the questions about how to improve, and also really to reach the goal.. This is what typical (indistinct) look like, the separators you can see, so it's a black one on top, and did not wanna say 'a black one'....

Didn't wanna say 'a black', separator, and system there, so we actually reduced the size of the spacer, these are your double.... This is an ideal unit, and reduced it by 55%.. So, you see the gray below? Really wanted clear, but I had to compromise at gray.. So, we had to.... Like, that was what commercially we could end up doing, and make it warrantable.. And then, we have these mock-ups.. So, here is a large-scale mock-up, and we're still testing, and testing, we did achieve the goal, and here it is.. So, you can see all along the river.. Okay, in construction, let's see.. Okay, this is it..

Take one quick sip.. All right, so now we're in construction, and I am super fascinated with the whole process, I had never built anything by the way, I also never had a retail store.. I think you're in a great position, because you're not tethered to any models or anything, this is where you have so much promise, you don't need the experience, you need to actually know, what's so valuable is knowing what you're trying to achieve.. So, in this case, I was not invited to the construction site

meetings, as an owner usually not, and certainly not invited on this site.. I was there every week and I loved it, I mean, come on, it's just, look at that, it is just so super cool to see all the materials, and even in our case, they were voluminous, not actually informed designed for freedom, 'cause now understood, even though this building looks so light on the land, the volume of materials was mesmerizing, it was quite a lot.. In this case, I had just been to Sundance, and I was like, "Wait a minute, we have arts.. How are we gonna show any film in a glass building?" Right? So, the middle institute, we.... We had to take the footings out, and created a space in the lower level.. And, always immersed, I think a little too immersed here, but I got mud up to my thighs.. But I love this image....

Because now you see, these are inverted egg crates, it was a system that we brought in from Europe, so hopefully it's gonna be more adopted, because you're using less concrete, and as you pour it over, and then the airflow acts like a radiant floor, and the air flows out to the perimeter grills.. So, what I see here too, is we have cold-rolled steel, you have FSC-certified wood.. FSC-certified wood, at that time did not include fair-labor inputs, it does now, but certainly reduces again, the exposure, to forced-labor in the supply chain, when there's more inspection of it.. Now, here's old-school modeling, we had to determine the height of the stage, literally just for that, just getting out our you know, you see in the background too, there's just cutouts of people making sure you can see, but again, determining that height of the stage.. Okay, I love, I think even since I was little, I loved walking on a roof.. So, this was actually very informative, because I understood how the roof was being designed, what you see is this beautiful, you know, beautiful roof, but I was able to see how it was even made by engaging, right? By being on the roof.. And then, in this case, it does look beautiful, to achieve this, there's also.... It went to the extremes, because normally you have protrusions in a roof, we even had to create a totem for the exhaust of the kitchen, that was in the landscape, like another whole section.. 'Cause you know Sejima and really Nishizawa are as immersed, and obsessed to ensure that we're reaching the goal.. Now, underneath the flooring, I started to activate the space with the arts to warm it up, so it's inherent in the whole atmosphere and the volume of it, we had an artist come in, we're just using nature, arts, and so forth..

Also, invited dancers, I don't think I.... I don't know that again, OSHA rules, and all these other things I was applying here, but how cool, right? And so, this is the court, that last volume that I didn't speak about, it is a.... The glass is, you can see is a parameter at the top, so it's light-filled, and it's submersed, so it's submersed into the landscape, on the left also has, there still now, is an art piece, and both Marcus Miller is on the right, he is a.... That is a hard mathematician, who was just starting embarking, this was 10 years ago, 2004, on his.... During to be a.... Decided to go and be a saxophone player professionally, right now he's playing with Jon Batiste, and he's also our music director.. So, when you're creating something new, our team are all on Twitter, there's never been a specific job that, with a line-up typically, right? It's the potential people to contribute was really.... (Sharon speaking softly) And we could also think about how we're gonna create that team.. And here's that.... At this point, before we open, not only inviting the arts to you know, be a part of the place, also had our stake in the ground, in terms of justice, and that is to end modern-day slavery..

And we had this point, and within the first year we had the UN university come, also inviting a more multi-sectoral group, and we had a report that went to the UN security council and passed 2331.. So now, what's happening? So much, there's like.... And all happening simultaneously, so people have a chance to engage as they choose.. That outcome I'm describing, 'Design for Freedom', this is at our summit just two weeks ago, and we had 550 come.. Just to be super clear, this is not.... This is.... We're undertaking, you know, we're taking on the entire construction sector, and creating this radical paradigm shift, to remove forced child labor from the building material supply chain, and it takes.... You know, it takes a whole industry to become a part of that, and that's what we did.. The built environment does have a relationship to nature and people, and the question that brought people around the table, is, "Is your building ethically sourced, forced-labor free, as well as sustainably designed?" As a question I asked end of 2017, beginning of 2018 to get people onboard, and the answer is, "We don't know." If you look around here, you don't know where these materials are made from, unlike even clothing, you know the prominence, you might not know who, but you know, "Oh, I know the origin, on a piece of clothing." But you don't know, and these are materials that are highly fraught.. So, the one thing to note is, with construction, you think about labor, but it's mainly on the job site, what's been....

The whole sector's been given a labor-transparency pass, on the material procurement side, and half of the cost of a building is the material procurement.. So, construction is the largest industry that is.... That has the largest industrialized industry at risk of forcing child-labor, it's also the most egregious violator of carbon emissions at 37%, and they do go together, and we can talk about that another time, why that relationship, you might be studying that.. But the size of the industry, nearly 14-trillion in consumer spending.... I mean, in spending globally, and there are new numbers that just came out, of estimates of the illicit profits that are being earned by subsidizing with forced labor, 236-billion, of which, that's on modern-slavery, of which 63 are.... \$63-billion derived from forced-labor.. At that time, there was no list of materials, and this is literally only five/six years ago, right? 2018, at the beginning, no list of the materials, so we issued that, and I also, I'll explain how that happened, because we started to.... Before I do, the most important thing is people, not the numbers, there's 28-million people in forced-labor conditions around the world estimated, likely more, and it's been escalating, the last estimate that was revealed, was 25-million a few years ago, five years ago, and it's escalating, it's not decreasing, even with more knowledge, right? About supply chains, and forced labor.. Here's that list of materials that.... Some of them have longstanding histories of forced labor, robbery, you might be studying these in different ways, but rubber, glass, fiber, textiles, steel, electronics, bricks, think about it, right? It's crazy..

Timber, and copper, stone.... Just let me repeat the rest of them.. Iron, minerals, and polysilicon.. Okay, these are at-risk materials, and we're not inspecting our supply chain.. Now, solar panels, so I'll pull up polysilicon, it's fraught, I mean it definitely is, solar panels are not sustainable, they're subsidized with forced labor, and made with that.. So, I know you're working on projects, this is a very important concept, because 35-45% of all the polysilicon in the world is being sourced from the bigger region of China, but that's not the only at-risk material.. You have steel, copper, aluminum, glass, glass also when I described that before, there are no third-party audited certifications for glass that include fair labor, there are for many others that we put in our toolkit.. So now, we also see some low-hanging fruit, right? There's been.... I said first food is called to be accountable, then clothing, next is shelter.. Clothing has already been accountable, and there are certain transparency you know, certifications that've been put into play, there's more....

There's more transparency in that sector.. So, now we're looking to take that sector, and that accountability, and convert that into interiors.. So, you know, curtains, chairs, carpet, right? Just in textiles alone, from that, from the garment industry we can convert, and we're doing that.. They're also.... Now, the question that I got quite often is like, "I've already..." And you might be thinking.... (Sharon speaking softly) But being sustainable takes a lot of effort, and it actually cost more quite often, and some people asked me, "Is this gonna cost more?" You know? "Is this gonna cost more now that I have to you know, go through this process to be ethically sourced?" And in my head I was thinking, "That is crazy." Because you know, I'm not going to accept subsidizing or ROIs with slavery, so that's why I was saying, I was saying, "Oh look, we're subsidizing our ROIs with slavery." And the response was, "Okay." Now, when you're developed.... So, in terms of trying to tell you, like explain how to create a movement, in this case, is also crazed a succinct language that can help to be adopted more broadly, so instead, converted that thinking and says they're gonna cost more, are we willing to accept the slavery discount? I'm not willing to do that.. So, I wanna show you the key factor here, when we say, "Challenging really fair market value." Fair market value is not fair, it's not the current price if it's subsidized with forced labor.. Another way to think about it, is that if the fair market value with fair labor is here, and the market price, it's really a fair market price up here with fair labor, but the market price is here without inspection, you don't know, it may or may not, that delta is the slavery discount.. So, that's a term that is starting to be adopted, I propose that about more broadly a year ago, and now the good news of the movement is starting to be adopted..

And another thing about building movement, from the very get-go, the urgency of this situation, really it made me think about having the full ecosystem to really come together, right? It's not just one sector that's responsible.. So, these you'll see in blue, it might be.... (Sharon speaking softly) Well, you can see it yeah.. These are the pressure points, that you do have agency, so whether it be owners and developers, there's an owners project requirement, you could say.... You can't actually right now, have a fully-ethical supply chain without forced labor, but you can determine a subset, and the media's important, terms of awareness, government agencies on contracts, and extractives, and manufacturers obviously documenting.. As a university, being able to initialize research, which I'll tell you about is happening at Stanford right now.. And then the public demand, right? That's a very important part of the equation.. So, bringing people around the table, and the idea from the get-go, is that we need CEOs and industry leaders to be a part of the working group, because we want them to make immediate decisions, and how does that happen? You ask them.. Everything that.... Most everything, it sounds like, "Oh, you have connections now." I asked those who built Grace Farms, and then I asked them to say, "Who else do you know? Let's ask them, and we're gonna have gender parity on this, and also in terms of gender/racial parity, trying to include, make sure that's part of our concept of how we wanna create that team, and did so..

And then.... And then, the next part that's really important too, is to have you as university students, really this is a gift to be here, because you as university students are able to imagine the future, but like I said, without being tethered.. And we're now.... They've been engaged at probably 25 universities, and I think it's a very important part of being able to you know, for you to carry the baton.. So, our first industry report, we formally launched the movement 2020, and those working group members, 30 of them were part of that, are a part if you can see it in the report.. And then people asked, "Okay, just tell me the.... Just tell me which one of those materials are made without forced labor." Well, we're at the beginning of the movement, we need the transparency, so we did start to say, "Okay, you have to use a toolkit, there's not gonna be a certification out there ready, we have to create it, we have to start to.... We developed a toolkit for the industry to start using, and they are." And then, our creative director, Chelsea Thatcher set, who's one of the co-authors on the.... Along with a foreign ambassador on modern slavery, just said, "Okay, what are we gonna do next?" Again, ask in the questions, "What's next?" Say, "Okay, now we need to have pilot projects, so here they are, they're in locations on three different continents, this is in three years time, three continents, and that means you have to get the whole team, like an owner, the architect, engineer, construction manager agreed to do this, and so we had three continents, 12 projects, and one really beautiful project that aligns is 'Shadow of a Face' with Nina Cooke John, which is the Harriet Tubman Monument that replaced Christopher Columbus Monument.. See that shot with the face? It's really extraordinary..

And Black Chapel, again, limited materials in London at the beginning.. And then we had a full-scale project in New Canaan Library, Turner Construction's on this project, and you'll see how now they have adopted, 'Design for Freedom', and are committed.. As well as MillerKnoll at Top Firm too.. And then 'The Brij' in India, this is now a bigger project, a million square feet, and it's with one of the large.... One of the key industrialists there.... (Sharon speaking softly) in India where there is the highest number of those enslaved conditions, so it's pretty bold to do that too.. And then, our tea is now starting to get RFPs for new projects, one of them that we just announced, we announced five new ones last week at the summit, and at 'Karsh Institute of Democracy' for the University of Virginia is onboard, you can imagine the capacity we're gonna have to

accelerate the movement.. And Design for Free & Ethical Supply Chain Workshop, Turner Construction, and State Department OBO said, "You've gotta bring suppliers to the table." And I said, "You're the one who has all the suppliers, so let's co-host a working group." Which we did just November, and have a report now that we also published last month.. Now, this is the main cause I hope that you'll carry with you, along with the discount, is that we need to ethically decarbonize, we're at a point in time now where we're already myopathy focused on you know materials in terms of embodied carbon, and what we've left out of the equation is embodied suffering.. And so, this is the time now, this next step, we coined the term 'Anna Dyson' from the Yale Center for Ecosystems & Architecture, and I coined this term, and that was just in September, and now, the press is already picking it up, and we're already starting to have that mindful, because it's important, because as we're decarbonizing, we have to determine who is making these materials..

So, we are accelerating the movement through this summit that just happened, 550 came, important to tell you because, we had 75 students from 30 universities, and on the left is your Sarah Billington, who is the chair of the Civil & Environmental Engineering department here, and I don't know if Antonio's here, but Antonio, so great, he is a PhD student who has now initialized the Design for Freedom research project, listen how cool this is, "To trace and understand the prominence of concrete." Don't know if this has ever been done anywhere else, right? This is incredible.. And in the middle is students from Pratt, and they are.... They're architecture students with Kai-Uwe Bergmann, who I also just invited to be part of the working group, they operate in 40 countries and it's pretty exceptional, but what they said, the students said this last week, (Sharon speaking softly) is just that, "It's the wisest part of our curriculum." And I want you to know that Sarah is already hoping to make that happen here at Stanford.. And on the right is Princeton students with or structural engineer, Nat Oppenheimer.. This is happening today, which, this is one of the panels that we had, it was called 'Navigating to Yes' with the AEC team & Legal, and on the left next to me, is Leslie King, she's a killer construction lawyer, we've worked with her for a number of years, and then part of the working group too, thing that's so important about this now is, "How can we get this into contracts?" So, on today's loop with all of us, let's all have the talk.... I have to chime in when I'm done with this, but we're trying to wrestle with a dilemma that persists, between being compliant with existing laws, there are now laws, when I go into the app, there's laws that are now making us accountable, and the capacity to be in compliance, it's a big dilemma, right? But now we have great minds on it, and working on it together.. We also now wanna initialize a public demand, and so, with every fiber is an exhibit that we're opening next month, and it does include Nona Cooke John again, and in the middle from Pentagon, been working with Eddie for 12 years, and Anna Dyson from Yale.. This is the exhibit, and not only are we going to create an understanding of the materials that are fraught, but there's a bio wall there, that is really going to be extraordinary, you'll see that when you come hopefully, but we're going to.... It shows the future, right? Of materials.. And then lastly, our Grace Farms teas and coffees, which I hope you get a chance to taste, but it's important, we're demonstrating what we're advocating for, B-Corp, and it is a new structure, that is wholly owned by the foundation, that gives back 100% to 'Design for Freedom', so this is again, an entry point for the public to engage, and even learn about 'Design for Freedom', you'll see that logo on the back..

And this is in Darjeeling, which is considered, Darjeeling tea, the champagne of tea, again immersed, and so, I just really, really invite you to be able to think about the agency you have to create a more humane future, and also note that we all do have agency to 'Design for Freedom'.. That's it.. (crowd applauding) - That was so, 00:47:06,153 so, so terrific.. I know we're coming up on.... We're almost at the end of the allotted time, and so, if there are any burner questions, please raise your hand, otherwise I may just take the liberty of asking a question myself, which is you know, one of the biggest gifts, Sharon, of this class, is that the students get to feel the agents of change, you know, first hand, and I think one thing that's so self-evident, I think everybody can feel this is the buoyant confidence that you have, you know, this is a narrative of like all entrepreneurial journeys of challenges.. But I'm curious, is that confidence something that you cultivate? Are there practices that you do, that you treasure now, that you wish you knew of when you began, or were you just born with this.... This effervescent energy to overcome challenges?" - I really believe that it's the microbe every day, 00:47:59,820 stands that you take, and I do that all the time.. I mean, I do that, it's just every week.. Like, I set examples of like, "Okay, bank account, puts the males name first instead of the female." Me, but my husband's on my.... It's like, "No, make me first, not him." And I have the ability to write all new checks, I mean, it's just like, there's little micro-aggressions, you know that people....

That I think are improper, like that's not how it should be.. So, that's just one example of 1,000, but it's just inside.... I don't know, just every.... It's a practice, and I just do it all, all.... Really, almost everyday it seems like, there's like a correct.... Like you're trying to help see in a positive way, "Okay no, here this is.... There's a better way forward." - With even small acts, 00:48:47,610 just getting energized for taking action on small acts, and then I also noticed that you were saying that every day you're conscious about what was good that day.. - Yes, oh that's super important.. 00:48:55,133 No, 'cause you'll not.... You will not....

And actually, there are.... I mean, you're looking for.... I mean, you're looking for the good news of day, which does happen, you have to look for it, it doesn't.... It's sometimes not obvious, so I literally say, "Okay, and the good news of the day is." "And the good news." Ravi You're saying that to yourself? 00:49:11,408 - I do, 00:49:12,241 and I say it out loud.. Ravi You say it out loud to yourself? 00:49:15,030 - No-no, I say it to whoever is within six-feet, 00:49:15,936 you know? So.. (Sharon laughing) So, no I literally do, it's like, "And the good news of the day is 'X', you know? Or 'Y'." - Well, the good news for us today 00:49:24,960 is that we had you Sharon, kick off ETL, so thank you, I have to draw it to a close 'cause we're out of time, but thank you all for joining us for the kickoff.. Next week, we're gonna have Qasar Younis, who's the CEO of 'Applied Intuition' joining us, and you can find this talk, and others on our YouTube channel, it's the 'e-Corner' YouTube channel, and

more materials you can find at '[ecorner.stanford.edu](http://ecorner.stanford.edu)'.. So, thank you all for joining, (crowd applauding) Sharon Thank you for having me.. 00:49:51,397 (calm music)..