



Co-Creative Gardening: Partnering with
Nature For Amazing Growth
-Machaelle Small Wright

Marjory: Hello and welcome to the Home Grown Food Summit this is Marjory Wildcraft, and I am so delighted today. This presenter has been really difficult to get ahold of, you have to be persistent to get Machaelle Small Wright to present. But this, I promise you, this is a presentation that will fundamentally rock your world. She really has a very different take on working with nature and growing food.

Let me read you a little bit about her background and I'm going to bring her on. Machaelle Write is an author, a researcher and a co-creative scientist who has worked in partnership, a key word, with nature for 40 years. She lives in Virginia at Perelandra which is her home and research center. Machaelle's work has resulted in a new science called Co-Creative Science. Traditional science, commonly known as Contemporary Science is the study of reality and how it works. Co-Creative Science is the study of reality and how it works by man and nature, nature intelligences, working together in a partnership as peers.

Perelandra's main laboratory is this 100 foot diameter garden and that is where Machaelle works with nature to get the information that she needs to create an inclusive balanced environment. She does not use organic or chemical pesticides. She doesn't use any herbicides or chemical fertilizers, she does use some organic fertilizers. If you ever watch her Perelandra garden videos you'll see how she organizes those and asks nature when to use them.

Perelandra's laboratory operates according to nature's principles of balance. As a result of her work, Machaelle has developed guidelines and procedures that anyone can use to establish a balanced environment for such diverse areas as an apartment, a suburban home, a yard, a college dorm, a kitchen garden, a business, a farm, a [inaudible 00:02:12] ranch, and of course in the area of human health. The principals of co-creative gardening apply in other aspects of your life although in this particular presentation we're just going to be talking about gardening but again those principals are identical.

So Machaelle, thank you, thank you so much; oh one other quick thing I want to say, Machaelle has written several books and Behaving As If the God in All Life Mattered is probably the one most people are familiar with. She also has the Perelandra Garden Workbook which is a workbook that takes you through her processes and she has a medical assistance program which is phenomenal. There's a bunch of other different books she has, but Machaelle, welcome to the call. Thank you so much for your time and I'm so glad to have you with us.

Machaelle: You're welcome and thank you for calling.

Marjory: Machaelle, I think the first way to start out would be, and this is the first thing that really blew my mind when I came across these concepts. You talked about 3 different ways to do gardening; three different approaches the Dominant, the Benevolent and then the Co-Creative. Can you describe the 3 different approaches briefly for us so people can have some background on the differences?

Machaelle: Sure. The Dominant is what we would call the people who take charge of a garden. They decide what they're going to do and how they're going to do it, when they're going to do it. They're reading and they're researching information that's already been laid out and no matter what happens they're going to do what they're going to do. They have some success in this. I'm not saying that there isn't any success in any of these gardens. I'm just saying that I think there's a better way of doing it.

The Benevolent, that you're calling Benevolent these are the people who really understand more about environments and they want to do the right thing for a garden. They tend to be the ones who get into organic gardening and to Rudolph Steiner and to alternatives. There's the Ruth Stout Method where they're really going a step beyond the old plow and plant garden.

And then there's the Co-Creative garden which is step beyond Benevolent. You want to do the right thing but the human being isn't the one in charge of figuring out the right thing. The element that is in charge is nature. It's understanding that nature can give you that information and it's all that information comes from nature. That's the difference between the three.

Marjory: If I were to summarize like this so the Dominant one is the guy we think of with the chainsaw and the bulldozer and the Benevolent one would be more of what are traditional organic gardening that most of us come from. The Co-Creative gardening would be one where the human is working in partnership with nature and we almost have a more subordinate role in deciding on ...

Machaelle: No.

Marjory: No.

Machaelle: No, the partnership is equal. That's something that needs to be understood. The human being does not go into a subordinate roll. The human being understands that when it comes to giving the direction, definition and purpose of a garden, that is clearly and completely and entirely in the human's lap. They decide what kind of a garden and they decide, okay, is it a vegetable garden, is it an herb garden? Are you feeding a family of 15 or are you feeding family of 2? Do you have a certain amount of land or are you putting it in pots on a balcony?

They make the decision of what kind of garden do they want and what they want supplied from that garden. The number of people and who has; my son is allergic to blah, blah, blah, blah, that kind of thing.

Marjory: Let's not grow that, right?

Machaelle: Yeah, right. Without that input there is no garden and nature doesn't make a move.

Marjory: Okay, so the humans decide the direction and the purpose ...

Machaelle: Yes. Once you make that decision, once you say okay, I want an herb garden, "I would like an herb garden please. I'm a really good cook and I use herbs all the time and I'm going to be cooking for 6." God, just the idea of cooking for 6 all the time just made me sick. Oh my God.

Once you make that decision then you have handed the whole assignment over to your master gardener and that's nature. And nature is going to then give you the information of where the best place is to locate that garden, how big it needs to be to give you what you want and the kinds of things you need to put in it to provide the balance so that you've got a growth of all these different elements in your garden that are in balance not only with one another but with the variables of the environment that's provided for where you're living. You're working together, constantly working together.

Marjory: How do I actually communicate with nature intelligence? How do I ask questions, how do I get that information?

Machaelle: Well, there are a number of ways, there are several ways. I think one of the hardest things I have to convince people or I find that to convince people is that how easy this is. think one of the hardest things I have to convince people or I find that to convince people is that how easy this is. There are a lot of people that are making a whole lot of money on how hard it might be. And it's not hard. Nature was always designed to work with humans on earth. They were always designed to do that. This partnership has always existed, it's just that we've gone through so many millions of years thinking that we're dominant and we're the most intelligent thing and it's taken us a while to figure out oh, wait we've got this partner next to us, let's turn to the right and talk to that partner.

Really, really all you have to do is say, "Nature, I would like to ask you a question about the garden." Immediately you'll feel this connection because nature doesn't have a choice, it doesn't have a desire to do anything else but connect to you. There is no magic formula to this. The thing that's hard to understand is there are 2 different intelligences involved here. One is the human intelligence, that's you and me, the one is nature intelligence and they operate on different principles.

The human intelligence operates on, making decisions; free will. The base of human intelligence is free will. We have to learn how to make decisions. In order to do that we have to learn how to read, to write, to study, to communicate, to argue to debate, to make a decision to change our minds, all the things that go into making one decision after another. From the minute we wake up, which we've made a decision on when we're going to do that, to the minute we go to sleep, which is another decision there are a million decisions we make in the day. The maturation process is to make those decisions really, really well or in some cases to avoid making those decisions and being really stupid. But that's a decision.

Nature doesn't do that at all. Nature's foundation is balance. Inherent balance and that's what people don't understand so let's say you, for whatever reason, you've gone nuts

and you're drinking too much and you decide that in your backyard you're going to make a cesspool for whatever reason. Everybody thinks you've basically failed at life. Why would you do something like this? Nature doesn't argue with you about that, that's your decision and you've made that decision but what nature will do is shift everything that's in and around that area to accommodate a cesspool.

The microbial population will change, the flora and fauna will change. Suddenly you'll find that skunks come in and other things don't. Or snakes will come in and other things don't and it's not that nature is falling apart. Nature is simply adjusting to what you've decided to do, and that's what Nature Intelligence is. It is constantly, constantly adjusting when it's working in partnership with humans to humans and what they want.

Marjory: What's the best way to ask a question?

Machaelle: What question would you like to ask, Marjory?

Marjory: Well ...

Machaelle: Ask your question.

Marjory: I've got my garden here, I would like to grown corn in this area.

Machaelle: Okay, that's the wrong question right there. What makes you think that your garden is supposed to have corn?

Marjory: It's a staple that I want to grown.

Machaelle: You're seizing control dear.

Marjory: I know, I know, I have a hard time with it.

Machaelle: Not only that but you've decided you wanted corn in your garden and they way you said it to me, you already decided where you wanted it.

Marjory: Yeah. I hear you, I got you, Okay. I want to be able to produce staples for my family of 4, how do I even begin to ask the questions for that?

Machaelle: What you would say is, well, there are a number of ways of approaching this. You're hot to trot and you can't go through life unless you're growing corn, you would say, "Okay, I would like my garden to include corn," but you don't decide where the corn goes. Nature's going to position the corn so that it is going to be in the most advantageous spot for the corn and the rest of the garden. However, let's say that for whatever reason, for a year; a season or two, if you had given a free rein to nature it would have said, "No corn, don't put the corn in," and this year you have a garden without corn. Okay, so you cry. Big deal.

Then you go into next year and you've got a garden without corn. Then you go into the

third year and you've got a garden with corn and you'll notice that the corn is growing better, stronger, there was some development that went along in that garden that allows the corn to be placed properly and to really come into its own being. If you're interested in food, what you'd really like is the most nutritious food and that's where you're going to get it.

Marjory: How do I communicate with nature to know where to plant what at what time?

Machaelle: It depends on how far you want to go with this and what you want to do. The first thing we introduce in the workbook is gut gardening and that's for people who are scared to go in for it. It's the get started in this and that gardening is you set the gardening up in 2 steps. You say, "I would like a vegetable garden that feeds 4 and honest to God, I'd really like corn in it if at all possible."

Marjory: Thank you Machaelle, thank you.

Machaelle: You're welcome. Understand something. Let's say the garden would have done better having 2 years without corn and then you start corn in the third year. If you push, if you push the corn into the first year, in order to adjust to that, you may end up with 25 squash plants. This is like you're playing with cards. For your corn, you want corn, ah you want that much corn. In order to balance the corn you're going to have to also include, this, this and this. You may need a book on cooking squash. Nature always functions in balance. It will not say, "All right corn," and just leave it at that. It says, "All right corn" and this is what you have to do to balance that.

Marjory: Okay let's say I'm totally open and I need to be open to not having corn necessarily this year but ...

Machaelle: Now that I've beaten you down on the corn.

Marjory: You've beaten me down. I've got tell you, I've just came back from Mexico with the Tara Mara Indians and I'm in love with corn now. I totally get that plant.

Machaelle: It'll be blue corn in our garden this year which I'm really thrilled about.

Marjory: Oh nice. How did you get the Hopi blue corn? How did you communicate with nature and then nature said; did God come down on high and say "Machaelle, blue corn, in the back corner of the southwest acre." How does that communication happen?

Machaelle: I haven't seen God on high in any of this.

Marjory: Yeah, me too.

Machaelle: Understand something. You're starting on step 1. I'm 40 years down the road so how I get that information is going to be different than how you get that information.

Marjory: Tell me how I should do it because me and everybody else ...

Machaelle: What you would do is say, "I would like this vegetable garden, I would like it to feed 4 and honest to God, I'm going to fall apart if you don't give me corn."

Marjory: Okay.

Machaelle: Okay. So then the thing you're going to want to do if it's a new garden; this is where gut gardening comes in. You open to nature which is nothing more than saying, "I would like to be connected to nature." That's all it takes, there nothing more! You don't pay anybody anything, you don't get in special clothes. You don't put feathers in your hair or cucumber in your ear, you don't dance around like a nut-ball.

Marjory: No incense huh?

Machaelle: None of it, no , no please. Put the incense out, you'll just hear me laughing. Honestly from here going, "Cough, cough cough," over in the corner.

Marjory: What about sexual [crosstalk 00:17:39]

Machaelle: That's the point I want to get across. This is what I want to get across to you. This is so easy because nature doesn't have a choice but to connect to you; inherent balance. I would like to be connected with nature. It has no choice but to connect.

Marjory: And it's that simple?

Machaelle: It is that simple. It doesn't argue, it doesn't think. All it does is adjust and you have just defined this particular situation, "I want to be connected," BAM, you're connected. Just as easily, I want to be disconnected, that's after the session that you're having with nature. "I want to be disconnected." BAM, you're disconnected because it has no choice. That's really important for 2 reasons.

One is, you're working with a partner that is that easy to work with. And number two, it really isn't hard to do and that's the first hurdle people have to get across. There's a lot of people making a lot of money making this difficult, and it's not.

Marjory: Would I then go over maybe a list of vegetables and say which one

Machaelle: You know what you do, you pick a seed catalog that will function as your basic catalog and all you do is go through it and you're not getting variety at this point, you're going through it and you're saying, "Do I include cucumbers?" and you feel sense, yes or no and you just feel it. The thing is, nature, you're asking for an answer to that question. Nature will do whatever it has to do to get the answer across to you. That's in gut gardening. If you're using Kinesiology you just do the Kinesiology test, yes/no.

Go through and you find out what kinds of vegetables you put in, then you go back and lets say cucumber is something you're putting in and then you say, "I want variety now," and you read through the list of varieties slowly. You'll get the hint what the variety is.

That's the variety you should put in. Some people really need to actually read the list again to make sure there's not more than one variety going in. We've had 3 or 4 going in at times.

Marjory: Aha, wow.

Machaelle: So there it is, you've got it. At least you've got the cucumber. God knows Marjory you've got your corn. The thing is the brilliance and beauty about learning about Co-Creative Science through gardening is you do it. You put those varieties in. You put them in the location where you're supposed to. So you've got this garden and you say, "Okay, I want the size now," and you pace off and get the feeling for the size. This is all gut feeling. It's all intuition. This is the first part of it before you do any kind of testing. Then you get the size, you get the shape and you get how things are to be laid out.

Then you find out where things belong. Where you think your corn belongs. It may not ever want to be where the corn belongs, it may be completely different. Or, like we did last year with the Hopi corn, you're gonna laugh, we had 8 stalks of Hopi corn in 8 different locations.

Marjory: Oh my God. That certainly flies in the face of conventional corn planting, doesn't it?

Machaelle: Yes, it does. And it all came together. Remember, my garden is a research garden. Not a kitchen garden and it all goes into creating balance in a research garden. Okay, you have one stalk over here, one stalk over there. We have a real tight planting in this garden that is inter planting. Massive inter planting and yeah. [inaudible 00:22:07]

Marjory: So, the purpose of my garden which I am very clear I want food production, is different from the purpose of your garden which is research and we as the human as defined the purpose and direction ...

Machaelle: Yes, and nobody in their right mind unless they're crazy like me would want a research garden. That takes you in a whole different direction.

Marjory: I'll leave that to you Machaelle, I'm good with that. Tell me, if I start doing this and I've got this Co-Creative partnership am I now going to never have any plant failures or insect problems? Is this the glory ...

Machaelle: Oh, sorry. You've got to understand you're not creating a garden, you're creating a garden biosphere. It includes the soil your garden's growing in, it includes the atmosphere, it includes a certain amount of area around the garden, whether that's grass or a field or whatever it is; a certain area. It's all part of the biosphere. It also includes wildlife. Wildlife has to be a part of this garden, it's a part of the balance. If you've got an insect problem, the first thing I say, "Is that a problem?" Most people don't say that. That's an opportunity.

Marjory: Have you got an insect opportunity?

Machaelle: The opportunity. I would say, "Is that a problem?" And if I got "no," then I would ask, "Well do I need to just leave it?" And most times it'll say, "Just leave it, it'll straighten itself out." That's the first question to ask, "Is this a problem I need to address?" Then I have in the workbook a troubleshooting chart. The troubleshooting chart leads you step by step through all the possibilities that you need to do because nature is giving you the information that checks off on that troubleshooting chart that you need to do to straighten out the balance in your garden. If you've got an insect problem, you don't have an insect problem, you've got a balance problem and the insects are telling you you have a balance problem.

Marjory: It's another form of communication through nature?

Machaelle: Yes you get a whole different relationship with insects and molds and weird things and my favorite is a black bear; a whole different relationship.

Marjory: Oh, my goodness.

Machaelle: Yeah, yeah.

Marjory: Oh my goodness. Okay, if we could just go over how people would get started in a gut garden. It sounds like it's 2 steps then.

Machaelle: It is, it's just 2 steps. You define what you want. What is it you want. What do you want and I understand Marjory, you want a garden with corn, I understand that. What's important about this is that's a choice you need to make, or you can make at that point. You can say, "I want a garden that includes corn." You can say that. That's part of your definition. Nature never tells you, "Don't say that," but you say it up front and if you want it with corn, what gets planted in your garden includes what's needed for the balance of the corn. Take the corn out and what gets planted in the garden is going to be that garden imbalance without the corn.

You're making the decision and it's really good to make those decisions right up top. It's also good to say, "All right this the garden I want to feed 4 people." That's important to let nature know right off the top otherwise nature will have you feeding New York City and that just takes a lot of time.

Marjory: You're right.

Machaelle: I mean really. You would also include, do you want a spring/summer garden? Do you want a spring/summer and a fall/winter garden? How far, how much do you want this garden producing. All of the feedback you get on fertilizing, and planting and layout, all of that's going to take into consideration how you're going to use this piece of land. Once you've made your decision on what you want. You have to keep asking yourself, "What do I want?" And stop yourself from saying, "I want the corn situated over here." Don't say that.

Marjory: Letting go of control is one of the most difficult things. I often find myself, for example,

it seems like when I'm at the garden center or the local nursery, there's like all the chaos, we're going to check out and we've gotta go, and there's the shopping list and all that and I'm there, I forget even to ask, "Should I get this plant?" Does this plant belong in my sphere or not. Sometimes I buy them and then I'm not like could y'all tell me is it okay if I buy this? [crosstalk 00:27:38]

Machaelle: You can give it away.

Marjory: Can I have this plant in my yard somewhere, is this good?

Machaelle: You can see it that way. Let me give you feedback on the question you asked, "Can I have this plant in my yard somewhere?" You can ask that question and you'll most likely get a "Yes" but don't be surprised if they say also, "And cut down the oak tree and put up 3 sequoias to balance whatever plant you're putting in that garden."

You're constantly, constantly dealing with balance. Constantly. If you want to take over and then catch yourself, then what you're going to get is the ramification of that takeover. The more that you catch yourself, the more you're going to learn, "Stop that. No, I'm not going to do that, no I'm not going to do that." This is going to take some time for people to catch on that they've got to let go of that part of control.

Marjory: I will testify that it does take time. I'm so enamored with this perspective because the potential of working with nature, that's the one who's growing all this stuff. Why would I not want to partner with nature so the potential for so much better production and the personal growth that comes out of it is the allure of the whole thing. It is like a whole nother journey in letting go. It's a really interesting challenge.

Machaelle: Well, it is a journey and as you change, you're partnership is going to change. As you learn to ask better questions, and clearer questions, the quality of your information is going to change. If you decide to forever stay gut gardening and you don't go into using Kinesiology to actually ask a question and then test and get the answer. If you stay with gut gardening, your communication is going to clean up tremendously because you have changed.

Your wording has changed, your thinking has changed, your ability to focus has changed. You've been able to catch yourself at your own pitfalls and stop that from happening. You'll know when you're too tired to have a gut gardening session. You're too tired to read your gut so don't bother. You need to eat something, so go eat something. You need to drink something, like a bottle of scotch.

Marjory: Sometimes there are questions that I just know that I'm not ready to hear the answer to.

Machaelle: Then you shouldn't ask the question.

Marjory: You're right.

Machaelle: You really shouldn't ask the question. When I'm talking about questions and you're getting that, then don't ask a question unless you want to hear the answer. When you ask a question, commit yourself to the truth, not to what you want to hear. So really asking, "Should I marry this man or not," is not a good question. Way not good question.

Marjory: Start with the easy ones first;,"Should I go out with this guy."

Machaelle: Right. Or should I buy this \$14 million dollar house? Not a good question, it has a lot of baggage that comes with it. That's another reason why starting with gardening is really good. You're asking about broccoli, you're not asking about mortgaging your house. You're asking about broccoli and if you lose a broccoli plant you don't have to commit hari kari, it's just you lost a broccoli plant.

It's much easier to start at the basement, start simple and develop into understanding you have this intelligence sitting right next to you and it is there to give you the information any time you want. It doesn't just say this is how the plant grows. It tells you what it needs, it tells it when it needs to be planted. It tells you where it needs to be planted, it tells you how to harvest it. It tells you what to plant next to it. It tells you what fertilizer to put in the ground. It tells you everything that the plant needs in order to go through a lifecycle.

Marjory: Wow. How could you not want to do that. Right?

Machaelle: Well that's been my statement for a long time.

Marjory: That's one reason I absolutely had to have you; have you on the Summit. The gut gardening system is a simple thing and that's what we went over. You have the whole Perelandra Gardening Workbook and a bunch of other resources. There's a wonderful set of DVDs where you go through the Perelandra garden and show people what you're doing and how you do it, specifically how you organize things and ask questions. There's just a ton [crosstalk 00:32:37]

Machaelle: I give you the questions to ask, "What more can I do for you?" I give you the questions and I have a section in the garden workbook on how to ask questions and the pitfalls of what to watch for in questions. Also, how to watch out if you're in control. You need a really good sense of humor. You cannot beat up on yourself. You really do. You can't say, "Oh no, I just took control, I'm a sludge, I hate myself." You can't say that. You gotta say, "Oh God, I did it again," and just laugh it off and go forward.

Marjory: I keep doing a lot of that, yeah.

Machaelle: Yeah, yeah, it really helps to laugh.

Marjory: So thank you so much for being on the call today. People, if you want to get in touch with Machaelle and start dipping into this, I highly recommend the material. Machaelle also has the book The MAP which helps you with medical issues and working with Nature Intelligence for healing your body also. There's so much material you have as

well as applying these principles to businesses and working with Nature Intelligence for businesses so much material and that button on the right there will get you to Machaelle's website. I hope this has opened up more people's eyes to this whole other possibility of where we can we be going with producing our own food and medicine and how to use it and working with this apparent intelligences.

Well Machaelle, thank you so much, I really appreciate your being on the call today.

Machaelle: Oh well thank you, it's been fun.