

Regenerative Practitioner and Living Future Hero Emmanuel Pauwels

Introduction ([00:02](#)):

Welcome to Green Building Matters. The podcast that matters for green building professionals learn insight in green buildings as we interview today's experts in LEED and WELL. We'll learn from their career paths, war stories and all things green because Green Building Matters and now our hosts, and yes, he has every LEED and WELL credential. Here's Charlie Cichetti.

Charlie ([00:33](#)):

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Charlie ([01:01](#)):

Hi everyone. Welcome to the next episode of the Green Building Matters Podcast. I have a pretty fun job here when I go and put on my podcast hat, because I interview a green building professional somewhere in the world and we get to hear their story. How did they get to where they are? What still inspires them and even a glimpse at the future. Today I have a very special guest. This gentleman became a very good friend of mine in the green building movement. We've done many masterclasses together. We've just encouraged each other as we're growing our businesses. I'm in Atlanta, Georgia. Emmanuel Pauwels, is in Barcelona, Spain. Emmanuel, how are you doing today?

Emmanuel ([01:36](#)):

Doing great Charlie. Nice to catch up with you. I'm looking forward to this chat together.

Charlie ([01:42](#)):

I can't wait to tap into your passion for not just green buildings, but especially regenerative design, the next chapter. I know you're dedicating everything to that, but tell our listeners your origin story. Take us back. Where'd you grow up and where'd you go to school?

Emmanuel ([01:59](#)):

I'm from Belgium, Charlie. It's a very small country, the size of Delaware. For those that live in the US, I grew up there, went to university, studied economic science, and I spent my summers working. In fact, my father had a large international company and I spent my summers working in the factories. I spent some time in the US in Missouri, some time in Ireland, lived in Indonesia for five years, and worked another 10 years for the company in Belgium. Again, I came back to Belgium. Finally, I left and I had to find my own way. I went on a sabbatical, traveled to South America and eventually ended up in Barcelona. Renovated a house and this was my first contact with real estate. I was already in my forties, I had nothing to do with real estate and that's when I started to get an idea of what real estate was all about. I did the long distance course at Harvard University on sustainable construction, they were talking about LEED which was still very American, was not as international and I liked it. I said, "Oh my God, there are some serious problems here in this industry. Let's see what we can do."

Charlie ([03:20](#)):

That's where you get the bug, as we say, for sustainable construction and design. Is it safe to say that this is really almost a second career for you? This green building movement?

Emmanuel ([03:30](#)):

Absolutely. It's my second life. I didn't go to any university and I learned that you can learn everything today in different ways. You don't have to have a degree. You don't have to go to fancy universities. It's not totally necessary because learning has changed. Education has changed, and there's so many ways you can get knowledgeable about something and that's what I learned. I am a LEED AP and I've got all these accreditation's, but that's what I learned. There's different ways you can really get knowledge and start working in any field you want.

Charlie ([04:09](#)):

I know you're an excellent teacher and I think you live the motto. I told you about the podcast here, in which we have to teach everything and I know you love to teach and we'll get into it about your companies. One side it's education and on the other side it's consulting and how to make better buildings. Let's go back to that Harvard extension class. You said it was in sustainable construction. They introduced you to LEED. Where were you on your journey? You knew you needed

to go and do some of this for yourself. You eventually became a consultant, help connect the dots from that, "Wow, this is a better way to do it and this industry needs help." What was the next thing you did?

Emmanuel ([04:49](#)):

The real "wow" was when I was going back and forth to Indonesia. A lot between Europe and Indonesia I was thinking about what I was going to do in the construction world. I came across a guy in France, sorry, a French guy in Indonesia. He was manufacturing wooden prefabricated houses and was looking for someone to develop those houses in Europe. I thought that sounded cool. I like wood. I like nature and they could do any architectural style. There was a moment where I thought about this business. I went to all these trade shows about wood construction, which included a lot of Germany and France. It's very different because I know you have wood as a construction structural material in the US, but it's not the case in Europe. One day I thought, "Okay, this is the worst ID that I could possibly have."

Emmanuel ([05:40](#)):

I'm going to get wood that is linked to deforestation, prefabricated by people in Indonesia that are not paid properly. I'm going to transfer that wood to the other side of the world. That's when I said, "No, no, no, this can be." With this course, which I was doing at the same time at Harvard University, this whole LEED system made so much sense to me. It was something Americans can do really, really well. It's like they got this very clear, easy way to implement systems, which covers all the items. This was still very new in Europe and I said, "This is it." I was looking at this industry with beginner's eyes. I'm not an architect, not an engineer. It was a bit difficult at the beginning because they were speaking in certain jargon and language but I realized very quickly that all these sustainable issues were not part of their education. There was a need to get updated (inaudible).

Charlie ([06:45](#)):

I'm happy that LEED was that system that you were able to use. I know you've worked on many LEED projects all through Europe, but you also work in other programs. I like to ask people along the way, Emmanuel, were there any mentors, anyone that you kind of looked up to that influenced you?

Emmanuel ([07:04](#)):

Not in my first career, Charlie, but in my second career definitely. Bill Reed is one of the guys which I adore what he does and how he thinks. With him, the work of the 7's group now, Regenesi, those people I've been following since I started. One of the first books I read. I didn't get it back then, but An Integrative Design Guide, I still have it here, to green building. It's been a Bible. Those people have always been my mentors and I'm taking classes with them now.

Charlie ([07:43](#)):

It's come full circle. What's next? I know you're working on what's next. Let's connect the career path dots a little bit. You're a founder, you're an owner, you're an entrepreneur, but today you call yourself a regenerative practitioner. Connect the dots and tell us more about your companies, green living projects and green living education and your team.

Emmanuel ([08:06](#)):

I started doing consulting, got one job and another one, another one. We started growing and the company I created was Green Living Projects. Recently I was reflecting on the name and it's still very relevant. The word living is in there and even now we're moving towards more regenerative work. We've grown to a group of seven people. I must say, I'm proud that today, when I look back with the work we do, we can support seven families financially, allowing them to do something they're really passionate about. I remember when I started, some of the thoughts were, "Oh my God, if I could just make a living for myself doing this kind of work" and that happened. Now we're 7 and we could grow even more, but we decided intentionally that our growth is going to be through collaboration.

Emmanuel ([09:02](#)):

We still have a lot of growth ahead of us, but not by employing more people. We now believe really in setting up mutually beneficial relationships, like the one we're having, Charlie, not by employing more people. We've been doing sustainability, we keep doing sustainability, but I think what is really changing in the projects that we're doing, if I look at mainly the last year, but looking for more projects that aim to create a systemic change. For instance, we're now starting a project at the end of this month. It's a very large camping site with bungalows. Some new people bought this and they want to create a new place and they want to redefine tourism. Instead of people coming there, you can be sustainable. You can leave less waste. They want to really regenerate the local area, create a

different kind of economy. Doing a similar project, but same topic as a regenerative resort in Sri Lanka, same kind of change. How can a resort become regenerative and a force for creating more thriving communities locally. How can we redefine tourism? Really changing projects with trying to reach some systemic change. The other two topics, which are really growing. One is the relationship between the urban and rural areas. There are a lot of issues in urban areas. There's a lot of questions being asked in rural areas. How can you reconnect those and give new meaning to that relationship? And then there is this whole area of people that wanted different lives.

Emmanuel ([10:53](#)):

The whole eco villages, that's a whole movement, which is really coming up. In those areas, we see a lot of growth and a lot of people waking up realizing they need to do something a bit more conscious and we keep doing our projects with LEED certification, but we're looking for a purpose. We can also see that investors are starting to look for more properties as well. Helping projects may not be regenerative, but at least bring more purpose to them, make sure they are applying the right processes. They ask the right questions, bring in more skills. In the recent projects we have brought in biologists, sociologists, and permaculture designers. We don't want to grow in number of people because you can hire all these skills, but you have to have a network, so it can bring them in when a project needs those skills to be present.

Charlie ([11:53](#)):

You've got a great network. I know you know a lot of people and can pick up a phone and bring in that expert. It's interesting, a program like LEED, I'd be curious in Spain, and I know you've done LEED projects all over different parts of the world, but a lot of the podcasts guests, I get an interview Emmanuel, and I say, LEED has been a great tool for 20 plus years. Without it, we might not even have the progress we have. If a client comes to you and says, "Hey, I've got a green building project," are they just assuming LEED in Spain or not? You've got to coach them through all these different options. How does that conversation go today? If a client comes to you?

Emmanuel ([12:31](#)):

First of all, the landscape of building certifications has exploded and there's a new one on the block every time. Before it was easier, we had a couple of major rating

systems. The first thing we talk about is let's look at the landscape of certifications. Let's understand a little bit what's going on because it is confusing for a developer with all these news grading systems coming up. Our conversations with clients are more about what is the value that you are seeking? How can we provide value? Is there certification that can certification add value to your project? That's the important question. If it can, then it makes sense, but let it not be a certification led or driven project. Let it be a project that is driven by a strategic reflection and plan on how we deal with sustainability and then find the right supporting tool to implement that.

Emmanuel ([13:31](#)):

That's a change because some clients said to me at one point, "Well, the CEO of a developer company says, 'Sustainability, we deal with it. We just say, we want LEED platinum on this building.'" We've done our work. I said, "No, no, you have not done your work. This is a tool that can support you, but you haven't really thought about what energy materials are. You've got to think about this really more profoundly." As a consequence, you can select maybe LEED certification as a tool. There's many other tools in the market so that's kind of the different conversations we're having instead of saying, and I agree with you with Charlie, when we started, we are grateful for these rating tools because that's the reason we exist as a company. Otherwise nobody would have listened to us and say, "What are you?" This is a program, it's internationally recognized and that credibility helped us exist and get work. But now there are so many programs out there it's on the second level. It's supporting something which needs to be thought of (inaudible).

Charlie ([14:40](#)):

Thank you for giving us that visual. I've always admired how you run your green building projects. You and I have been fortunate for three or four years to teach a LEED project immersion, a master class about LEED for new construction or building design and construction. We've seen the tools and how you coach on how someone should be an excellent LEED project manager. It's so important. I want to just repeat that for those listening, you're going to be tempted to just chase the certification and chase the points, but there's just so much more to it. There's just so much more to it. Let's take a look back. What are some of your proudest accomplishments?

Emmanuel ([15:17](#)):

I think of two accomplishments, which I'm proud of, and the first one is my home. This home Calgary, as far as the profession, the work is concerned. I think it's the physical manifestation of a new way of living. For me, it is looking back because we've been doing this project for the last five years. It is the start of a transformation, which goes way beyond what I could have imagined when I started this. I'm excited to see what's coming next. That physical building, that project I'm very proud that I've done because it really the beginning of a new way of being and working. The second one, we touched upon it before. I'm also really proud we have Green Living Projects. I know it's not a big company, but it's seven people dedicated and it's a bit of a community. It's like a family and seeing that as a viable system with a lot of vitality and a role where we can help projects do better. I think those would be for me personally. I'm proud of those two.

Charlie ([16:46](#)):

Those are amazing. Thank you for taking us there and I'll throw one more in, and then we'll talk to you about Cal Guerxo in just a minute in detail. You have been named as a hero from the International Living Futures. When I look up what they said about you Emmanuel, and for those that don't know just the entire Living Building Movement. A home that Emmanuel has been working on is building a living home. They called you "A tireless champion for the Institute and programs in Europe " and you actually help create a living future Europe. I wanted to throw that one in there. You've been called a "living future hero." From me to you, I think you understand there's the business side of green buildings to have a company and being an entrepreneur, but then there's also this side that I see you going all in on. Strategically, even for your business and your employees, you're over here with living buildings and regenerative design. The thing is that we still need to do to really repair some of the damage done to our planet. I want to say, "Proud of you for doing that." We talked about it a lot in the US ,capitalism and just where you're at and you're able to provide for these employees and families and still do the right thing. There's always that tug of war and back and forth. Let's talk about CAL GUERXO. For those that this is the first time they're hearing of Emmanuel and this amazing project, I guess it's what two and a half, three hours outside of Barcelona in the mountains. Can you give us a little background about this project where it's located and why it's so important to you?

Emmanuel ([18:35](#)):

It's a project, three hours north west of Barcelona, it's at 800 meters altitude. 2,500 feet or something in the mountain spirit is beautiful. I'm surrounded by nature. It's an existing medieval home. Originally the stones were put together about a thousand years ago. It had a previous renovation because it ended up in ruin. I was in touch with the Living Building Challenge. I liked those ideas and I was going to renovate this home and I wasn't planning on renovating a lot more homes. I thought that's the one. I thought to myself, "Well, if I really want to promote and be an advocate for this vision of how we should build, and I have no other option than just do it, try it myself."

Emmanuel ([19:31](#)):

It's called the living building challenge. I said, "Okay, well probably it's probably a challenge." My team got excited about it. A lot of other people got involved because it's not just me. We've got our whole team and we learned a lot on the way. What is the outcome of the project? There's the physical infrastructure. It's net positive on energy. We produce 12% more energy than we consume on an annual basis. It works 100% with rainwater. It's disconnected from any other source of water. It doesn't contaminate all the black water that is being treated on site. Those are the performances, water, energy, but materials as well as the most challenging. We had to check every single ingredient up to 0.0, 1% of every material used in the house.

Emmanuel ([20:29](#)):

That was a massive work and it led us to use a lot of natural materials. Obviously because it's very hard to get all these ingredients. A lot of manufacturers are not giving those ingredients, but it makes you an advocate for transparency in the material sector. You don't always see that but there's a lot of work. Not just the physical infrastructure, because it is a beautiful place. Also the outdoors, the nature, the permaculture garden, the organic pool, it's really turned out into an amazing place, but it's what we learned doing it that is helping us move forward. It's a small house. It's a small house, but it can have a big impact. We're learning that through inspiration workshops.

Emmanuel ([21:27](#)):

We organize volunteers that have been spending time here. We have a volunteering program where we engage with volunteers on regenerative development. It doesn't have to be in the built environment. You can regenerate

everything, your relationship, your life, whatever project you're working on your career. It's more about what happens in a place than the actual built infrastructure. How does it impact humans? What social impact communities? What new interaction do you develop with nature? You realize that the building is a catalyst for something else to happen. If I would just sit here by myself, in my nice energy water, efficient building, then what does it serve? Nothing. You realize you've got to serve a higher purpose, and that's what we're trying to do with this house.

Charlie ([22:24](#)):

Well, I know you're doing it. I know we've showcased it on a big webinar through GBEs or education company for those listening to the podcast, while this is audio only, I'm going to put a link in the podcast show notes, so you can watch the webinar interview and see the visuals and really understand more about what it takes to make a living building. I know part of it too, if you get to work on some living buildings or some net zero and zero carbon. My team here in the states does, but they've got big multimillion dollar budgets. What should we be doing in your case? This was your own personal budget. The volunteers help. It's taken some time. I think you've even said it means even more to you it's you are so resourceful to pull this off. You've talked about the community, the impact, anyone that visits or learns about it, but just I know it was tough. It was tough to do this, but you didn't let up. Can you speak to that for a minute?

Emmanuel ([23:23](#)):

One of the frameworks I really like Charlie is the one where you have at the bottom the technology, the materials. A lot of our conversations are on that level. What technologies we use for PV materials. You go up a level. Then you have the tools levels. I consider a certification at all or in every simulation modeling of carbon calculation. You'll use tools. I think most projects work on tools and technology, but then if you go up another level, you have to process what kind of, because we have a standard process on how to design and build. It's standard and you fall into concept design, you have all these concepts and processes, and then you go up one more level and then you have a mindset.

Emmanuel ([24:19](#)):

How do you look at the world and what you're doing? Very rarely, almost never. We work on our mindset and very rarely do we work on the process. We use a

standard process, which we've been learned and teach and taught. Going up to that mindset. First of all, starting from there, how should we be thinking about this project and taking the time to reflect with deep questions its amazing. What that does to a project team? The only thing you need to create the opportunity to have the time and the authority to engage with a team, to have those kinds of conversations. If you can, then you will come to the conclusion that we may have to do things a bit differently. You have to change your processes and you can, co-create new processes and different ways of doing. You go down to tools and technology and technology without a purpose. Is solar energy good? Well, depends in context, what you're trying to do? So that would be my sort of take on it. We have to work more on these other levels.

Charlie ([25:34](#)):

What a great visual, just the tools and technology that I think we default to, which are already better, but now processes and then it's mindset. Even earlier in our interview today, you've even used the word systemic. I know we're just pushing on what we should be doing. Let's talk about the future. If you had a crystal ball Emmanuel, what's next in this green building movement?

Emmanuel ([25:58](#)):

I think our conversation so far is a big hint. It's regeneration. It's working from that different mindset and the science are on the wall or investors are no longer looking for short-term profits. They are not stupid. They understand we're not talking anymore about, "Well, we are running out of resources very soon. The conversation will be, oh, we ran out of resources." We have another 25 left 25 years left for copper after 20, within 25 years, there's no more copper. What are we using for our electrical wires in 25 years? There will be no more. This is the main fertilizer for agriculture. The whole agricultural industry is gonna all of a sudden have this today, a crucial ingredient. We're going to hit the wall very hard, Charlie, very hard.

Emmanuel ([27:00](#)):

Unfortunately, as humans, we need to hit the wall first and then we stand up. My God, let's be creative now and that's what happens. We have all these systems that don't work. We've got to rethink them. The future is definitely that because the wall is there. We're going to hit it very hard. All we can try to do is get as many people as possible. It's like, "Hey, wake up" and think, "Okay, because the changes

are systemic and it doesn't matter if you talk about the school system or the political system, any kind of system is run from a current mindset. It starts with living systems thinking, which is a different way of looking at the world. For me as well, this is something I've learned over the last couple of years. When you start seeing things differently, "Oh my God, I had so many limiting beliefs. We can do things differently." The future is definitely regeneration. I don't see any other options.

Charlie ([28:03](#)):

You're all in on that. Tell us a little more about some coursework you've even taken here later in your career with Regenesi, maybe a glimpse at some things you personally want to teach. We're partnering together on some things coming up, so everyone listening be on the lookout for that on the regenerative design, but tell us how you've educated yourself even more on this next step.

Emmanuel ([28:28](#)):

I started with what's called the TRP, the regenerative practitioner course with Regenesi and that was a life changing course for me. What I have been engaging with in this course is very practical tools to apply regenerative thinking on projects, on building projects, and it connected with me. It was, I discovered a vocation. I said, "Okay, I want to try to get to as many people as possible, the tools and the kind of thinking required so that in their projects, they can start working with generativity." They can make projects in which the focus is how we can make life thrive and that's what we're doing, Charlie. That's why I'm so excited to be doing this course with GBS to bring these very practical tools to as many dream building professionals as possible. It starts with, with living systems thinking.

Emmanuel ([29:29](#)):

We will engage with that. We need to think differently and it doesn't work by just telling people. It's going to be what we talked about, Charlie. It's a whole different way of teaching. I don't like to call it teaching, but it's about personal development. It's about those aha moments that you say about, "oh my God, now I see something that they didn't see before." What we want to do in this course. We want to really work with some of the frameworks that I learned from Regenesi and that I'm applying. We get practical experience in all these projects that I talked about. The more people that have those tools, the more chances there's gotta be some regional regeneration in other projects.

Charlie ([30:15](#)):

I just feel your energy. I know you're very excited about this, but there's work to do. Everyone please be on the lookout for that. I just want to agree with the Emmanuel. I've been doing this a long time and while many of our projects need to fight to get anywhere close to net zero, the ultimate goal is net positive and beyond that is regeneration. It's not as far as we might think, but there's still a lot of education for our stride. When we were kind of a LEED project 15 years ago, if we had some LEED APS on the project team, it's just easier. We're talking the same language. I think that's what you're trying to do. Your next step is how do we all get to start talking the same language? What I keep hearing in this interview is the mindset is just the paradigm shift is just, how do we maybe not totally hit the wall? It's like we're already hitting the wall and just go ahead and have that paradigm shift. What's your specialty or gift? What would you say you're really good at?

Emmanuel ([31:11](#)):

Well, it's funny, you asked me, with our whole team, we had our astral chart read recently, but it was wonderful. We have this wonderful person that is really good at making an interpretation. What it, what it helps you do is start remembering your essence again, because we forgot that. Who are we really? You start resonating through that exercise and putting that in common with our team. It seems that I'm quite good at, I would say sourcing information and I'm putting it together, integrating it in a different way and communicating and communicating that to other people. I seem to be good at that. I seem to be able to have a good intuition for what's to come and with the focus on intuition. I can't really explain why I think so, but it seems that I can sort of catch where we are going? What's going to happen? I think those are gifts, this communication. That's why I love teaching. I seem to be good at that and that intuition as to, "Okay, what do we need to be working on" because there's some changes coming. What are those changes?

Charlie ([32:38](#)):

A few more questions here about you. How about habits or routines? Do you have any good habits or routines?

Emmanuel ([32:48](#)):

My number one routine, Charlie, the most important one. When I wake up, I get out and then go for a morning walk with a dog, but I'm not doing it only because the dog needs to get out and have a walk, but it's a 20-30 minute walk before starting a day. It's always to nature because I'm surrounded by nature. It's about setting an intention for the day. It gives you 20-30 minutes and says, "Okay, what is this day about? What are we going to do? What is it trying to do today? How am I going to be doing that?" You can do it with meditation. You can do different things, but this is my number one routine ritual in the morning. It doesn't matter if it's in the summer and the winter going out, have that 30 minute walk before.

Emmanuel ([33:40](#)):

I have my breakfast which is also a ritual, but in general, the routines and rituals I have in my life are meant to make sure I'm sufficiently grounded. I take time for myself. I tend to rush into things and the same for you. I will, we get inundated with emails and messages. Creating rituals are meant to create those moments when it's like, okay. I love the outdoor sauna ritual. I love that one. I love it's a great experience. I do that regularly.

Charlie ([34:19](#)):

It's right there on the property and airway to see that play serves itself. The grounded-ness. Can I ask for a follow-up? Do you practice gratitude or just staying grounded in general? It helps you be present. I'm trying to understand, is it more about being present and having intention for the day? Is it also practicing some gratitude or all that together?

Emmanuel ([34:46](#)):

It goes together. Charlie. First I reflect on what it is? It goes beyond your agenda. Of course it's based on your agenda. What is it? What's what's here today? What meetings do I have, what I'm trying to do. You always try to find that level of quality in what you're going to do that day. You think about how, how do I need to be, what kind of person do I need to bring to these meetings or be conscious about that because sometimes we're tired or we get, we get excited, or so we and there is a moment of gratitude by definition because it's always in nature. I think about things I'm grateful for. It sort of goes together,

Charlie ([35:29](#)):

Thanks for taking us there. There's one more nugget that I totally agree with is how does that other party want you to show up? Maybe it's the end of the day, your willpower's worn down, but that other party, how do they want you to show up? I think you're saying, "What's it take two seconds to just say, "What, I need to show up like this for this situation." So that's great. This is really good, let's talk about the bucket list. Emmanuel, I'm a fan of bucket lists. What are one or two things on your bucket list? Are there some events or some travel? Write a book about what's on the bucket list?

Emmanuel ([36:03](#)):

The bucket list is experiences that we want to achieve before we move on.

Charlie ([36:12](#)):

Yeah. So not to be, but just what else is out there you'd want to do?

Emmanuel ([36:19](#)):

For me, Charlie? I have traveled quite a lot. I've lived in five different countries. I've been to about 60 plus countries. I have traveled quite a lot so I would say this, at this stage in my life, my bucket list is basically to find joy in the small everyday things of life. Maybe not everybody has their own bucket list. I've seen a lot of the world. I'm happy serving small things. It's not a spectacular, but that's for me once.

Charlie ([36:54](#)):

Don't downplay that. I think I've found that from those, I interviewed those that have traveled to so many countries already. They kind of want to be a little closer to here and have that day-to-day impact. I've got to pull one out of you. With the regenerative design, is there a goal? You said thousands of people. What kind of bucket list goal would be around regenerative education? Is there a certain number of people you'd like to make sure hear your message

Emmanuel ([37:22](#)):

In regeneration? We don't like to use metrics. We like to use images to describe experiences, the perfect image for this one. I can see people coming and going here and learning and it's like, "wow and they talk to other people and it's like, and everybody talks about it." It's about focusing on potential. Potentially 7 billion people, that's the potential. If you want a number.

Charlie ([37:53](#)):

No, you gave it to me. I asked for it. The image that came to my mind is the butterfly effect in the potential there. Thank you for taking us there. Thank you for sharing that. Books. I'm not sure if you like to listen to books or pick up a hard copy and read it from your living home in the mountains of Spain. Is there a book you'd recommend? It doesn't even have to be about green Buildings?

Emmanuel ([38:19](#)):

First of all, I'm buried in books. I got a library here and I'm proud of the fact that most of them I haven't read yet. So that shows the potential of what I can still learn from that library. I'm really focused on this, on this topic so that's who I am. I get obsessed and I still have a lot of books to read, but for those that want to get in touch with this and learn a little bit more about reading regeneration, I would really like to recommend a book, which I loved, which is called *Designing for Hope: Pathways to Regenerative*. *Designing for hope* gives a bit of an overview of that whole movement, the mindset who is working in this area. I liked it very much as an introduction with examples of projects.

Emmanuel ([39:18](#)):

Also like all the books from Charles Eisenstein and, one book he wrote recently called *Climate: A New Story*. I liked that as well. I know we're talking a lot about sustainability. Carbon is a big topic, but when he just talks about a new story that needs to be born. In the end, it is about this new story. I like that as well. I'm reading right now, *Responsible Business* from Carol Sanford. Anybody that has a business, including yourself, Charlie, how do I think about my business? How do I make my business really thrive, using this living systems thinking, and that's what her latest book is about. It's really very powerful. One more, I think, which I read quite a while ago, but it's called *Designing Regenerative Cultures* from Daniel. He lives in my Orca in Spain where he's from. I don't know if his origin I think is German or something. A really great book introducing this whole regenerative culture. Those are some books that really, from all the things I've read, I liked for somebody that wants to get into this area.

Charlie ([40:38](#)):

Fantastic recommendations. I'm going to put links to each one and our podcast show notes so everybody can go check out and get a copy of these books. We'll link the courses to the webinar about Cal Guerxo. Two more questions. Sometimes

those listening are just now getting into this green building movement. Someone, maybe a recent college grad, or sometimes it's maybe a later chapter in their career, like your story, but what advice do you wish you had known a little earlier in your career?

Emmanuel ([41:10](#)):

I'm sure my previous career has had its benefits, but I wish I would have started, but then the times were different as well. I would say if you want to get into this business, this field goes straight to regenerative because that's where the work is and work from what you really care about because it is going against mainstream still. You need a lot of energy to keep going. One of the major sources of energy is something inside of you that you really care about. If you work from a place of care and love for something, and you put your own personality in it, don't try to do what is expected from you. Just try to put in your who you are that's going to give you the energy to keep going.

Emmanuel ([42:09](#)):

That's when people say, "Oh, he's not like all the others because you're yourself." And because you get tired of not being yourself so try to think. There's a very nice story in the book of Cal Sanford in this. I'll tell you about it very quickly. It's not my story. It's her story. It's a guy that was doing food catering at weddings, tough business, a lot of personnel turnover. His essence was talking and listening to clients. At the end of the story he changed his business. Going back to his essence, his business is now interviewing these people that are getting married, families, listening to their stories and what they do during the wedding is doing theater, singing with the stories of these people, creating a whole spectacle. They also serve food, his business, thriving. He's got a waiting list. His prices went up. He has no more personnel turnover. Why? Because he reconnected, what did he really like to do? He put that essence into this business. So that's what I'm trying to say, be yourself and work from something you're really passionate about and that you'll be really good at.

Charlie ([43:23](#)):

Wow. That was awesome. I know our previous jobs and careers and in your case, you got to travel the world, see cultures, you got to understand the US and how to do business here. I'm sure it helps you with your real estate clients and how to handle that. Sometimes we also learn, what do we want to do and what do we

not want to do? Part of those previous experiences, but, I think that's another vote for this book. So lastly, as we start to wrap up here, let's just say someone is jumping in right now. They're getting inspired by hearing your story Emmanuel. What words of encouragement do you have for them?

Emmanuel ([43:58](#)):

I would say there is a fee. This is a field where this is only growing and you may not know exactly what role you're going to be playing in this field, but you should never be scared because there's so many things that can be done when I started, I wanted to be a developer. I didn't know there was not enough time here to tell the whole story, but, eventually I found my position or role in this whole thing. And that took time and I wonder, oh, am I going to be successful? I'm going to be able to get a salary from this or make a living off this so that you should not be afraid of that because there is so much need for this. It's growing. Just keep, keep looking because you can't, you really can't fail. You'll stumble a couple of times. Yeah. But eventually there's so much opportunity in this field and so much need, so don't be afraid. Just go,

Charlie ([44:55](#)):

It's a very welcoming community, the green building movement, there's a lot of intrusion points and I'm just really inspired today by our conversation. Everyone, please reach out, connect with Emmanuel on LinkedIn. We'll put some of his information down there, but this has been an Emmanuel Pauwels coming to us from Barcelona, Spain. He is an entrepreneur in this green building movement and has an amazing team and he calls himself and he is a regenerative practitioner. Emmanuel. Thanks for your time today.

Emmanuel ([45:23](#)):

Wonderful talking to Charlie. Thank you very much.

Charlie ([45:28](#)):

I just want to say thank you to our loyal listeners. We actually are celebrating over one year here on the Green Building Matters Podcast. Me and the entire team are stoked and so glad to continue to listen every Wednesday morning to a new interview with a green building professional here in this industry, or just some pro tips that we want to make sure that you are getting straight from us straight to you.

Introduction ([45:53](#)):

Thank you for listening to this episode of the Green Building Matters Podcasts at gbes.com. Our mission is to advance the green building movement through best in class education and encouragement. Remember, you can go to gbes.com/podcast for any notes and links that we mentioned in today's episode. You can actually see the other episodes that have already been recorded with our amazing guests. Please tell your friends about this podcast, tell your colleagues, and if you really enjoyed it, leave a positive review on iTunes. Thank you so much. We'll see you on next week's episode.