



Our Hen House Podcast: Transcript for Episode 668, Interview with Lisa Dumas

Jasmin Singer: Welcome to Our Hen. House, Lisa.

Lisa Dumas: Hi, Jasmin. So nice to be with you today.

Jasmin: I'm very excited to talk to you. I have to tell you, when I heard about your organization, I was like, "Oh my gosh, this sounds amazing." And then I kept reading and I realized you were in Rochester and I think I might have started jumping up and down.

I am fairly new to Rochester, I've been here for a year and I...we have to become best friends is basically the point of what I'm saying. If that's okay.

Lisa: Yeah! *laughs*

Jasmin: Okay. Perfect. Well then I think that we don't need to go on, I've accomplished everything I've wanted to...I'm kidding, I have a lot of questions!

Okay. Let's start off by talking about the problem as you see it, and then we'll get into some of the solutions that you're pursuing. So to start, Lisa, what are some of the barriers that underserved communities face in obtaining healthy plant-based foods?

Lisa: Well, the problem with Rochester, so you and I are both in Rochester, like you were just saying, is that there is a high level of poverty here.

When you have high levels of poverty and underserved communities, which are mostly black and brown communities, there are a lot of negative outcomes, such as lack of access to healthy foods and information about health and wellness. And in Rochester, in particular, which you probably also saw from some information that I sent, it's surprising because it's the home of Wegmans, which is a large supermarket chain, one of the largest in the country.

Yet we're just surrounded by food deserts. So not only can you not get to plant-based items, you can't really get to any items other than whatever's overpriced in your corner store or your local Family Dollar store. Dollar stores are on every corner, and you have to try to make your way out to the suburbs to get to an actual grocery store.

So those are just some of the the basic problems.

Jasmin: I have so many questions I want to ask about Wegmans, but I'll hold off for a second. What does research show about the willingness of people in these communities to shift their diets in a plant-based direction if it is made more accessible.

Lisa: Research does show that people are open to it and actually, they want to eat more healthy and they want to shift their diets, but there's a certain stigma surrounding it in their communities, which can hold them back.

And there's also that lack of access that we're talking about, and also affordability that ties into many other things and even ties into plant-based companies and foods hopefully one day being able to bring their prices down.

So to me it's just, it's kind of a complex issue. There's a combination of things that can keep people from being able to actually access those items even if they wanted to.

Jasmin: So true. Ugh! There's a lot going on here and it's issues that I think a lot of people, even vegans, don't really think about nearly as much as it should be. Not only thought about, but directly addressed.

You've cited research which shows that more than half of Latinx and Black respondents strongly or somewhat agree that there is a stigma in their culture around people who eat plant-based foods. Have you found this to be the case? And if so, how do you overcome it? I mean, that's a big question. Like I'm basically asking you to solve everything.

Lisa: Right? If only I could! Yeah, I definitely find that to be the case. I have to approach it very specifically and not in a pushy kind of way. Also understanding when people might say, you know, "I might wanna eat this, or I might wanna... but I need to still be able to have a bacon," or something. Because certain things are staples in certain communities.

So I like to approach it by just saying, you know, “Maybe even trying a meatless Monday,” you know, or telling people that there are things that are accidentally vegan that they're eating that they might not even know that are vegan, like Oreos. “So you're not aware the Captain Crunch cereals are vegan!” And if you approach it in that way, then people realize that they don't have to lose out on things that they like, which is something that people often think.

I think that's with anybody when it comes to veganism as well.

Jasmin: Totally true. Yeah. And it is of course the opposite. It's like a very abundant way of eating. But I'm saying that also from a place of privilege. I'm saying that in an area that is not underserved, and I am not part of an underserved community.

How would you say plant-based food companies are failing these communities?

Lisa: Oh goodness. Well, , I have many opinions. Jasmin.

Jasmin: I love it. I love it. Let's bring it.

Lisa: I just, I think I'll just kind start whatever comes to my brain. In a basic supermarket, say you have organic produce. I know we need to use chemicals, well they use chemicals when things are not organic so that they can make more and have more for the large population that we have in this country, or whatever.

But if things are better for you organically, I don't understand why it's not just made that way. We have so many advances in science today, in my opinion, they could probably come up with something that would still allow them to have the crops grow and be abundant for everyone without poisoning people.

And when it comes to plant-based food companies, even I, who may not live in real abject poverty, I look at some of these items and I just think that the prices are high. And I would think that if you would lower your prices and come down that difference would make up in the quantity that you're able to sell.

So I don't understand, you know, because they are high, and now with meat prices going up, there should be a switch inevitably to more plant-based items on a broad scale anyway, And it should, I don't know if I'm correct about this, but cost less to make if you're not using animal products.

So why is it that they are so high? I mean, if they were cheaper, because that's another thing that can also be a barrier. I don't wanna offend anyone, but I sometimes get a little bit annoyed at things like that. And I even think about organizations like PETA because I wish that PETA would spread their message in these communities as well.

And I see them talking about animal rights and things like that, but I don't think that they necessarily get to those communities either. So I think people have to make a more concerted effort to reach people in those ways. I don't necessarily know that that's being done.

Jasmin: Yeah. I think we're on the same page in a lot of ways with what you just said.

Lisa: It's like you said though, you don't think about it. Like you were saying, coming from a privileged place or another place. Cause even I, in going into this thinking about diverse populations, did not think about all diverse populations. I just joined a deaf vegan group in Rochester on Facebook recently.

And then I thought about that and I said, "Well, okay, so I have another group!" And I posted how to say the word vegan in American Sign Language because I never even thought of that, you know what I mean? As being part of diversity.

And then I went and looked on YouTube and saw that there's a blind vegan with a YouTube page and she shows how she makes all of her foods and things. So, you know, it can even branch out into all other areas that we don't always think about.

Jasmin: By the way, we do offer written transcripts of our interviews, so be sure to share the written transcript of this with that Facebook group, because they would probably really appreciate everything you're saying.

So I wanna go back to Cap'n Crunch, for a second, because you just mentioned it and of course we all know that vegan foods aren't always healthy. I would say the vast majority of people listening to this, including myself, are motivated by ethics, not by health. But we know that of course it's always good to cut out meat, dairy, and eggs, but when you focus your messaging on health, how do you deal with vegan junk food?

Lisa: To me, when you're talking about these communities that you wanna encourage to switch, most people are intelligent people and everyone knows that fruits and vegetables are good for you.

I can remember being a kid and hearing you had to get that five servings of fruits and vegetables every day. And I would think to myself, “How in the heck am I supposed to get five servings of fruits and vegetables with all the other stuff I'm eating?” But little did we know that that was all we should have probably been eating, you know?

So most people already know that, but to get them to say they will make the switch, they need to know that it's not going to be as difficult as they may think. Like, “Oh, I just have to give up everything, everything I've ever loved!”

And in the communities that I'm talking about, when you don't have those grocery stores, when you only have a Family Dollar, if you're going to go in there and get some cereal, you want to get the one that's gonna be the best choice. You know what I mean? So it's important to let people know those things, even though it may seem like junk food, but it's still a healthier alternative, and I think in this type of situation you have to approach it that way.

Jasmin: Yeah, I think that's really true.

You mentioned Rochester at the beginning, you mentioned Wegmans. I want to go back to that. I know that you're starting a program in Rochester that you hope to take nationwide, and I do want to talk about those plans. But first, let's go back to Rochester. What do you think Rochester needs most and what is keeping it from getting there?

Lisa: Oh boy...

Jasmin: I know. I'm sorry. I should have warned you to have an extra cup of coffee.

Lisa: It's just the problems are so vast here. I work in journalism and up until a few years ago, I was actually covering a lot of things in the city. And I became really kind of disenchanted with the whole thing because I was kind of seated from a viewpoint where I needed to stay objective because I was news writing.

But I had all these opinions because I would see when it comes to politics...I believe, first of all, all politics are local. You need to have the right people in place. Rochester has a lot of people that get in there and stay in there, but they're not really change agents. So Rochester, from the 1960s, there was an event, it's been documented, there was a documentary made called the Riots of '64 because during the civil rights movement, Rochester was the first city in the north that needed to have the National Guard called to it because of race riots.

So when I learned about this, I saw the neighborhoods that were involved, these same underserved communities where there was systemic racism and discrimination, are the same communities that are having these problems today.

So therefore we need to figure out why these communities are still having these problems and what we can do to change that. I think they need to change the community. The neighborhoods in Rochester do not work the way they're set up. There's become concentrated poverty within the city. There was also white flight during sixties and seventies where whites moved to the suburbs. They took their votes with them, and so then the people in the city became neglected.

So it's all just part of this fad cycle that has happened in many places around the country. And in order to change that, you have to have people that can get in there and think outside the box. I mean, Rochester has something called The Rochester Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative. It's called RMAPI.

And for a long time they couldn't figure it out. Governor Cuomo gave them a bunch of money before he stepped out of office a few years ago, when I was covering it. And now they've got new leadership and I did see, the last thing I saw was that they decided to test out some universal basic income, which the new incoming mayor has also decided to do.

But you've got to think about things like that in order to help people get the lift that they need. So I can go on for days, you just stop me whenever you want. But there are many things that are complex, like I was saying, that you could do in the city, but you need people that are really going to be change agents, not people that are going to sit there and you have the same problems for 10, 20, 30 years.

Jasmin: You mentioned you were a journalist. Were you with WXXI or somewhere else?

Lisa: No, I was doing some freelance for a small local paper. They were minority-owned and they were basically trying to cover the issues in these areas. And then I started going in and doing a little bit more full-time editing.

I hesitate to mention their name because, in some ways, they were actually part of the problem. Because I became more aware of sometimes how things can go on behind the scenes, or not go on, just based on the politics of news writing, politics of journalism even. Which is part of what I became disenchanted with.

And it's different when you're covering things locally that involve politics and people and, you know, people are connected. But I did that for about four years and I also stepped away from it now, for about the past three years. But I even stopped looking at the news, to tell you the truth, not just because of pandemic, but cause it can become frustrating when you see that things are not getting done, maybe why they're not getting done. Who cares, who doesn't. Who appears to care, who doesn't... You know, it's complex.

Jasmin: The reason I went on that tangent is because I find that fascinating. Like with writers, journalists, and also artists or photographers, like war photographers for example. At what point are we just sort of reporting on what's going on and at what point do we step in and make a difference or state a claim? Or is it making a difference, is it stating an opinion to just be there at the crossfire, reporting on the story or photographing the story? That's something that rattles around my head a lot, and I think it's really fascinating that you were like, "No, I need to be at the forefront of making change here. I can't just be reporting on it."

Lisa: Yeah. It's kind of funny because when you go to school for journalism, also when I went to print journalism, they pound it into your head to be objective, especially for news writing. You know, you keep your opinion out of it, from journalism 101. And so I had done it for a very long time and then I realized all of a sudden, "Wait, I have an opinion. In fact, I have many opinions." You know what I mean?

And so you get to a point, I think, where you just kind of have to make decisions about what you want to do, what you want your life to mean and be. This is something that I believe in. So I just decided that I would rather spend my time doing something that I believe in and making a difference rather than doing something that could possibly make a difference, but it was not having the impact that maybe it could or should.

Jasmin: Yeah, I totally hear that. Okay. I want to talk about Wegmans, but for our listeners who aren't in Rochester, I think that this is relevant to you too. I think this is relevant to everyone, because we all have a Wegmans... Maybe it's not a Wegmans, but it's a Whole Foods or maybe a different grocery store.

I have heard a bit here and there about the issues here, where Wegmans is not in areas where underserved communities can get to. And I've heard some other issues too, but you're very much more in the know. So do you mind explaining to our listeners what's going on here?

Lisa: Well, I can't tell you exactly what's going on because I don't know what Wegmans' thinking is. I can tell you that they used to have a couple of stores in the city. They used to have one on Mount Hope where College Town is now, it's near a university where there are lots of shops and stores.

Jasmin: That's where I live.

Lisa: Okay. Now you used to have one there. They redeveloped it. It was on Mount Hope Avenue. I remember because it was convenient for me because I used to live near there. Then there was one, I think on a place called Dewey Avenue, which is now a Price Right, I think. Which is one of the few locations where there's a small grocery store in the city.

But I read in the *Democrat and Chronicle* at some point that Wegmans had plans to expand within the city, but they scrapped it. So my guess is...and I'm just going to tie it to a short story, if I can tell you really quickly...the service light came on in my car. So someone says to me, "Well, you can just go to one of these local auto places," and we have a place called AutoZone, and he said, "They'll plug in this little machine and tell you what it means," and he said, "They do it free of charge." So I said, "Okay." I was on a street called Lyle Avenue in city of Rochester, which is a very neglected, I would say probably "problem area" people would call it. There's a car shop that I would go to there sometimes as well.

So anyways, I go to AutoZone because I'd pass right by there but this person told me to go so I stopped there. I say, "So do you have this machine?" I explain whatever. And the guy says, "No, we don't have one here because we cannot have that machine because of the demographic in the area." So I said "Okay." He said, "But my sister location just past Long Pond Road, they can do it for you there." I said, "Long Pond Road!?" And I don't know if you know where that is, but it's far away outside the city. Going to a suburb called Greece, basically. I said, "Oh my goodness!" So I said, "What about the one on Clinton Avenue?" Another area in the city. He said, "Nope, same thing there. We can't have it there because of the demographic in the city." I said, "Oh my goodness. So this is just a shame."

So, basically, instead of figuring out a way to find out what the problem is, why you can't have a single machine that you can take outside and plug into someone's car. For this service, I have to drive to the suburbs.

So basically, to me, it's the same thing because of the demographic, probably, where Wegmans are located. Probably if they had problems, they said, "We're

just going to go out to the suburbs.” So you have to travel very far to get these basic services that other people can just have whenever they need them. So to me, there’s a larger issue there.

Why not fix the problem or focus on the problem in the city so that you can have your store so that I can get this service, so that other people who can get this service there, may not be inconvenienced like I was that day as well? Wegmans, they may have a problem with theft or losing their assets or whatever it may be. I mean, I'm sure they would have insurance, first of all. But secondly, now when I go to the Wegmans in Gates, which is straight down that same road, Mile Avenue, you go out here to another place called Gates, New York. I see police standing there at the door, armed police as though they're on duty. So the problems, if you do that, are not going to stay in the city.

The city's going to deteriorate, as it has, but they're going to go right out there, down that road, and they're going to be at that Wegmans anyway. So to me, it makes more sense to fix the problems in the city rather than just try to move and avoid them because when you try to avoid a problem, it doesn't go away. It's still there. It gets worse, and it's not probably going to make its way to you anyway in the end, right? That’s just how I see it.

Jasmin: Yeah, I agree. I think this is a problem everywhere. It's very much related to dietary racism, and it would be nice if these giant monstrosities, like Wegmans, like Whole Foods, can do more instead of just optically. I recognize that there's a lot of healthy foods available at these places, a lot of plant-based foods. But that's not going to do very much if they're only reaching people who might have the means to go further for it in the first place.

So let's switch gears and I want to hear about the Food That Slaps program. Can you tell us about it?

Lisa: Yeah, that’s one of the programs that we're hoping to be able to implement and it's really just kind of trying to use a term, if people don't know what the term slaps means, it just means that it's good. Like how, way back in the day, people would say “food that's the bomb” or something. So now culturally we're just wanting to use that term to connect to people, because it's changed. Now they say, if something's good they'll say “that slaps.”

Jasmin: Oh good. No thank you. I'm taking notes because I'm never up on what people are saying.

Lisa: Yeah, I know. It changes so fast.

But they'll say, "That Impossible Whopper slaps," you know, if they like it. So for people to kind of speak in terms, culturally, that people will get. We're trying to go in to different communities where culture matters, and it does.

So we'd like to have pop-up events and, using that as our slogan, offer people free plant based items to try. Give people information about things that are accidentally vegan, like we were talking about. Hopefully also one day even start a mobile food pantry so that we can drive to these places that...because right now what we're thinking with the popup events is to do it at the corner store where people are locally. Just going directly into their neighborhoods.

I mean, we don't want to do this in places where we're not getting to the people that we want to get to. So we want to just go in there. We want to meet people where they are.

Jasmin: And I know that under the Food That Slaps program, there's free grocery giveaways and health related pop-up events, and also hosting events at community centers like churches and bodegas.

I think that's really cool. How do you plan on getting people there? Like what is going to appeal to folks who would benefit from the Food That Slaps program?

Lisa: We're just giving away free stuff to people!

Jasmin: Yeah. So that alone, yeah. Got it.

Lisa: Yes. We still strategically have to figure out...I mean, churches and community centers are easier, corner stores and bodegas and things like that we can advertise.

We can just show up there and literally pop up, which is what we may want to do because, you know, I want to keep people safe as well. And like I said, it's a complex situation. Some events like at a church and community center may be more appropriate to say, "we'll be here this date and time."

Other places like corner stores and bodegas. You never what's happening and what other people are thinking about. Just to be honest, to say, "we're gonna be here this date and time, giving away free stuff." Sometimes there can be activity going on or could take place that we may not want to have meet us there.

So those places we may just pop up. They're always frequented by members of the community. So we'll just be there to give away our stuff.

Jasmin: Yeah. Cool. That's amazing. How are you working with restaurants in underserved areas?

Lisa: So we are planning to...and I say planning because a lot of it's preemptive because we're very new.

So these are the programs that we are going to be implementing. But we are going into the restaurants because many times there are a lot of ethnic restaurants, Jamaican restaurants in these communities. They're lot of certain Hispanic foods and things like that. And I'll go in there.

I went into a Jamaican restaurant. I thought it was really cool because she had a sign in her window that said, "Just pay as much as you can" for whatever you wanted. So I was just asking her a little bit about that. And then I said, "Hey, do you have any vegan items on your menu?"

And she said, "Um, well, not really." She said, "I have to learn more about that, find out more about that and right now people just kinda get like cabbage and rice." I just kind of thought to myself, "that's boring." You know what I mean? So if we could basically go to these restaurants, go back to that restaurant and take her some jackfruit. Maybe a recipe to make some curry jackfruit, just to give them menu guidance.

And there are also some restaurants that are already doing that here. I don't know if you've ever heard a restaurant called Allah's Kitchen. I need to connect with them, because I think if we can connect with some people that are already doing that, they can also help with giving guidance to others.

Jasmin: Yeah, from what I'm understanding, it's like a two-way street. There's restaurants like the one you just mentioned that could have more vegan options or a vegan option. And then on the flip side, there's vegan restaurants that might be able to have even one item, hopefully more that's like pay what you can.

Which it does remind me of what Cafe Gratitude did. I was living in LA for a while, and Cafe Gratitude had like a community bowl that people were able to pay what they want. So it seems to be like both sides here.

Lisa: Yeah, I've heard about something like that too. I'm originally from the southern tier area of New York and there's a little coffee shop there where they have something called a pay it forward tree.

And so people can purchase a receipt. Basically you pay for, it's like a blank receipt and they put it on this tree. If someone came in and needed that or needed to pay for the balance, they just take that receipt and they get what they need. You know, I think things like that are so cool.

Jasmin: I love it. Yeah, I love that.

Lisa: Yeah. And so it basically, yeah, it's like a two-way street, like what you're saying. So I myself and my board members, these are the things that we talk about that we want to do and we want to get out there and get started doing. We just need the community to galvanize around us.

Jasmin: Truthfully, that sounds just like exactly the kind of project I've been wanting to get involved with. How does your small business loan program work?

Lisa: We were also talking about the fact that these things are changing. We just kind of want to help with the push, make sure that the word gets to everyone.

But I mean, if you think about McDonald's testing the Beyond Burger, or if you think about Burger King and the Impossible Burger, whatever they might be doing in the future. They are changing. So we also want to have other programs in place, and one of them would be offering micro loans for small businesses.

Because say someone wanted to start a nonprofit like this, we could maybe give them a micro loan to pay their filing fees, you know what I mean? So they don't have to worry about the money. Pay for your tax exempt status, pay your fees to start a small business. So we want to be able to offer those to people.

And then our only requirement is that they hopefully can maybe pay that forward to someone else in the future, because we don't want to get into a situation where we're expecting people to pay us back. It's not what this is about. We want to give people things and give people resources and give people the help they need.

Because I think when you get into loans that have to be paid back, it's just going to be another albatross hanging around someone's neck that is another thing that only fosters more negative outcomes.

Jasmin: Yeah, and I mean, this is an interesting time to be interviewing you because you are just starting this. I know that you do have ideas for future programs.

You mentioned a few of them. You mentioned the food pantry, which I'm so excited about. I would love to help with that too. Are there any other projects that are up your sleeve? I know you want to work with schools, like what's going on?

Lisa: Yeah, so we definitely want to...when it comes to restaurants and giving them menu item guidance for plant-based items, we would like to start a Restaurant Week here in Rochester.

So say a restaurant put a plant-based item on their menu, maybe during that week they could feature it. That week on the menu they could offer at a discount. We could have other restaurants that are already vegan, feature something for that week and just bring attention to it in that way.

When it comes to schools, I mean...you mentioned coming from LA I mean, you probably heard about Gavin Newsome just investing like 700 million in schools in California for plant-based menu items to be at school menus.

Mayor Eric Adams, in New York City, did the same thing with offering plant-based items to students. So we just feel like that's something that we should be able to do here. And the school district in Rochester's a whole nother story! But it can only help, I would think, students to be able to...and the most complaints that you have when it comes to something like that is that they're not offering the right thing that students want, blah, blah, blah...

They have some issues with that in New York City, but there are some districts that have done it well. And I think Portland is one of them that I read, so maybe we could give some guidance on that and show some models that are actually working. But it's just another way to help get the message out there.

Jasmin: Totally. Do you ever bring in environmental and animal rights messages? How are they received? Or do we just kind of deal with the like, in front of us emergency to begin with?

Lisa: Well, right now that's kind of how we're looking at it, is like the immediate need. But of course those things play into it.

I mean, when I first went vegan, it was because I read Alicia Silverstone's book. That first book she wrote in 2010, it was *The Kind Diet* or whatever. So I was always looking for different diets and things like that. And when I read that, it just made sense to me where she said like milk is bad for your body, animal products are bad for your body, you know, dairy, meat. And she explained it in

such an easy way for me to understand. And then later for me, I thought about the animal rights aspect of it and that ethical aspect that there is.

And by the way, our logo, that is on purpose. It says “Every one's value is equal.” Not everyone all together. Every one.

Because now we have come to that point where...one of my board members, you know, animal activism is a big thing for him. And that's another thing we want to kind of have diversity of thought for the whole organization. But I think now, just starting off with what we are trying to do is getting that message out there.

And then I feel like the rest will come with the evolution of it. And so right now we have to just kind of focus on getting people to kind of even understand our message. Kind of align with it.

Jasmin: I totally think that's the right way to go, and I'm just utterly thrilled to hear about all of your work.

I know you're growing so much. How can people learn more about your work, follow you, and support your efforts?

Lisa: Oh, thank you so much for mentioning that. Yeah, they can go to our website at equalvalueforall.wordpress.com and when you get there, you can click on Ways to Help and it'll show you all the different ways.

And right now we have a fundraising campaign with t-shirts that are really cool. Like we were just talking about earlier, one of them says, “I love plant-based food that slaps.” So you can go look at all the different messages that we have, and then when you purchase a t-shirt 100% of the profits, go to Black, Brown and Diverse Plant-based People for Equity.

We also have a little children's cookbook on there. It's called *Five Freakishly Fun Plant-Based Shortcuts to Food Your Kids Will Love* and I'll just tell you one of the recipes in there. It's got one of those little hacks, I don't know if you saw quite a while ago, but there was this thing online where people would take a box cake mix, and a lot of those are accidentally vegan by the way.

And they would just put a can of soda or use a can of coconut milk. That's all you need to basically make your cake. So there are little like shortcuts in there that kids would like and that are plant based, but the profits are all coming to us.

So anyway you'd like to contribute to us, if you'd like to get something in return for your contribution that's one way. Otherwise simply donate to us.

But we do have to say that we're only able to solicit donations in New York State, cause that's the only state that we're currently registered in as a charity. By law, you have to be registered in any state that you solicit donations in. There are like nine states, I think, where it's not required. Iowa, Idaho, Delaware I knows is one. Wyoming, Nebraska, those are few. We have them listed on our website. They'll see that all under ways to help. We are currently still in the process of filing for tax-exempt status, so if you would want to receive that status, you'd need to consult with the tax professional if you just gave us a donation where you wanted to receive that deduction and find out whether you'd be eligible for that. But we're currently process filing for that.

Jasmin: So what is the website again?

Lisa: It's equalvalueforall.wordpress.com and. We are currently on Facebook and in the process of getting all our social media together, and by the time this airs, you'll have that information from me for your viewers, so you can hopefully post all the links to that on your website as well.

Jasmin: Yeah, definitely. We'll post everything in the show notes that we can and that's really amazing. I'm just definitely going to buy that t-shirt, today probably. And truly, whatever you need, feel free to reach out. By the way, I don't want to be giving bad advice here...but I do think that with the solicitations, I think that what you find in the books is a little bit antiquated because the non-profit laws existed before the internet did.

So I think that as long as you're not doing physical mailings in people's mailboxes, it's perfectly okay to solicit over email or social media.

Lisa: Okay. Oh, you know, I think that's so funny because I was thinking that people can just go on the New York State Charities Bureau, search for our name and see that we're listed as a charity.

So that must be antiquated because at some time they must have wanted you to be listed in every state so that a person could search for you in every state. But with the internet anyone could search for New York's website and still see us there. So that does make sense.

Jasmin: And also I think that there are thresholds for soliciting. So if you raise like more than \$20,000 in a particular state, for example, and this varies state to

state, so it's annoyingly confusing, but you only need to register in...Like for example, we have a large donor in New Jersey, so we register in New Jersey as well but most...We could talk about this offline too, if you ever want to chat about it.

Because Our Hen House is a non-profit and so I've definitely been through all of that and I know it's very confusing, but things like this are especially confusing. Anyway, I'm getting completely off track here, but I just want to reiterate for our listeners that we will include all of the links that you said in the show notes so that people can find you and follow you online.

It's equalvalueforall.wordpress.com. And I hope that you stay on with me a little bit for the bonus content, Lisa, but thank you so much for spending time with Our Hen House today. And I really appreciate all that you're doing so much.

Lisa: Oh, no problem! Thank you, Jasmin.