

Still Small

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Episode 4 - Prioritizing Relationships

A chat with my friend Jason

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Jason Lakis, thanks for being here. You officiated my wedding. So you're pretty important to me and my husband and you met him in 2010. Right. And you were guys, we're going to start college. We actually were messaging back and forth on the, on the Gonzaga university, I guess, my space chat, the my space equivalent. I was messaging with Mike. Yeah. In 2009, which is pretty.

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Unreal, you know, you go from 2009 and to 2000 months, your wedding, 2022. Yeah. Last year, you know, you go that long from just strangers to messaging each other to officiating a wedding. So yeah, it's pretty wild. That's bonkers. Yeah. I have that same thought of just knowing someone going from strangers to deep friendships, but also when you have a friendship breakup, or if you have a breakup.

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It's also just strange to think of how close someone was was to you. And then they're just a stranger again out in the world and you don't know what's going on with them. So I didn't mean to make that depressing, but it's just weird how you can go both ways and go from stranger to so close and vice versa. It's weird. Yeah. Me and your husband's relationship was meant to be. I love it. And you guys have grown and changed so much since then. I mean, who hasn't changed in the last 15 or so years, especially

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from age 18 to now, you know, but it's funny to look back. College together. Yeah. It's fun to see you guys have so much in common, even though you're very different. And I think that's really cool. Would you say that's accurate or no? Yeah, we're very different. That's for sure. I think, I mean, Mike is Mike. I don't know. It's, uh, for people that know him, that's it makes perfect sense. But yeah, I mean, we have grown so much since college, but.

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I don't know, in the same way we are kind of still the same individuals. I mean, we're, Mike, especially, he's always been super driven and just always curious and never really satisfied with, I guess, a normal result. And that's really, that kind of defines Mike in a lot of different ways as well. But yeah. Do you feel that defines you too? The never really satisfied? You know what? I, so actually listen back to.

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One of your guys's or both your episodes prior and you were talking about the. That's the enneagram. Yeah. Any agram, any agram, you know what your type is. So I actually did the test and I don't know if I, if I like it, but it said, uh, and it said I was a three, but Michael's three too. Yeah. So I'm a three with seven. I was going to say seven. Yeah. So I don't know. I guess I.

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vigorously pursue tasks, which is, which is true, but I don't know. I think these tests are all it's, it's not an all be all. I think they're good just to kind of. To make an assessment and just to kind of ponder about it, but I don't think it necessarily defines necessarily who you are, but yeah, I mean, I like the, I think I'm not easily satisfied, especially when it comes to, you know, things that I'm doing or pursuing, which can sometimes

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Be a little stressful, but that's, that's what makes me mean. You know, that's what makes Mike Mike and so on. Yeah. Did you feel like when you read the description for a three, it was two on the nose that made you not interested in it, or do you feel like it just wasn't how you see yourself? To be honest, there was a paywall after the second paragraph and I stopped. Fair enough. Yeah.

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No, but from what I took from it, I thought it didn't resonate. I thought some parts did, but I'm not, what is a seven and an eight? I actually wasn't able to really read up on those. You know, I'm not an expert by any means. It's just, I have a few friends who are sevens and that I could see that for you. I think it's very much a Renaissance person who's doing multiple different things and has a lot of different interests. Again, don't quote me on this, but.

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gets very easily excited about new ideas and follows those passions. And so that's something that I see in you. Gotcha. That definitely makes sense. So I think maybe probably a little bit of both is, yeah, yeah, makes sense. One thing I think you're really good at is maintaining really deep relationships, long distance. And I think that's very unique for men. And maybe you don't agree with that, but I think that it can be hard for

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people in general to maintain long distance relationships. But I think especially for males, it just seems that requires a little bit more vulnerability to call someone and really check in. And I just admire that you, you do that with all of your friends. And I just think that's really wonderful and unique and not something that everyone does. Yeah. I think you said it too, but the whole vulnerability aspect of it, but I mean, I it's clear and I've made this clear to myself.

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in my life that I've prioritized relationships as that's, that's number one for me. And I think, you know, as a, as a nurse, especially just it's within kind of my being the, to heal, to give back to others, to be thinking about others, to strengthen others. That's, that's kind of my comfort zone when I'm helping people or when I'm reaching out to people, when I'm strengthening relationships. And yeah, being vulnerable, you mentioned, I think is

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is key when you're prioritizing relationships and not just prioritizing them, but really digging deep. And that's kind of how you, I don't know, that's how you suck the juice out of your relationships. And yeah, I mean, I try to pride myself and really focus on that because in the end, that's really all that matters is, you know, your faith, your family and the relationships that you have. Mm hmm. Yeah.

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I'm really struck by you saying you're a healer and that's kind of part of your identity because I first heard that term about this woman who I didn't really know, but I, she passed away suddenly from COVID and I talked about this in the podcast episode I just recorded, but she identified as a healer and she was this really inspirational person. And so when I heard that, that really struck me and I thought, wow, I identify with that. And I

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want to be a healer as well. And I kind of put up a wall and said, oh, but I'm not in the medical field. I'm not a nurse. I'm not providing physical healing. But I don't think that you have to get bogged down in that one narrow definition of healing. And you kind of touched on that, on how it's really just about being connected and vulnerable with other humans. And so it can look a bunch of different ways, but I just think it's very interesting that you named that because I do feel anyone in the nursing profession

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would identify as a healer. And I definitely see that in you. And so when you're talking about the way you maintain your relationships, it's interesting that that's the through line that you see as well. Yeah. Like you said, I think being, it doesn't just mean that you're in the hospital working with patients or this and that. I mean, you could heal people with just a simple conversation and you could heal people.

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at the gym when you're just making side conversation or saying something, you never really know when you could heal anybody. And you kind of bring that mindset into everyday life. It makes things a lot easier. But yeah, I mean, I was, I was born around it, both my mom and dad are both nurses. And that's kind of all I, all I ever knew was that kind of mindset and caring for people.

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And yeah, I try to bring that into all my relationships. And so it's funny, I have, I mean, of course, all my, all my guy friends that I have and female as well, but it's, it's nice knowing that I'm relied upon for a lot of medical questions, or at least with the relationships that I've made through the medical field, you know, I know doctors, NPs, PAs, you know, surgeons. So I know I have kind of the whole gambit underneath my belt. And so, yeah, I mean, if I,

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I could help someone out with a referral or anything like that. It's just nice to know that I have a really good friend group and people that I'm able to coordinate with each other just to provide any type of healing. Yeah. Any type of care and connection there. That's awesome. Yeah. You said that you grew up around it. Your parents are both nurses. Did you feel pressure to become a nurse or did you see?

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the way they lived and you really thought, I want to emulate that or neither. Yeah. No, I think it was the latter. Um, I think just, like I said, naturally I kind of, I'm a, I'm a people person. And then when you pair that, when you pair that with the science and just, it was kind of a perfect match. So yeah, I went in to as a freshman at Gonzaga with a nursing and music major.

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which the music major ended up just becoming a minor. But yeah, I always kind of knew I wanted to go the science route. And then I think as high school kind of came around and I started actually looking at different jobs and hey, nurses get paid really well. There's a lot of opportunity. There's a lot of opportunity for growth. You could travel. These are all things that I love and I'm passionate about. And I'm in a room full of girls.

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Why, why wouldn't I be worse? It'd be a lot worse. And I got really good at Brady and Brady and hair. Cause I'm always sitting behind. Did you really? Oh my God. Yeah. I had the, what's the, the main braid. I had fish tail down. Wow. That's a tricky one. Most girls don't have fish tail down. Kudos. Yep. That's so that's, that's what I, that's what I was, that's what I was doing at Gonzaga nursing school, braiding hair and carrying brothers. Love it.

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Oh my gosh, that's fun. You talked about how you were gonna be a music major too. So when did your musical journey begin? And did you always play multiple instruments, one instrument, how did this start? Yeah, my parents both, they're both pretty musical. My dad was in a band in high school and throughout his kind of college career. I didn't know that. Oh my gosh, I gotta show you, I'll show you a picture when we're done with this, but my dad just, you know, he's...

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pretty bald now, but he had, God, this was the, what, the seventies, I suppose. Yeah. Late seventies, just long, luscious, blonde hair. Oh my gosh. Just massive flow. He was on, he was on the track team. He was pole vaulter. He was the lead singer to a garage band. Yeah. My dad got after it. Yeah. I see where you get it from. Yeah. Yeah, really. And then my mom.

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She plays guitar. She could actually still strum some chords here and there. And she sang in church, I believe, as well. So yeah, my parents stuck me in violin lessons when I was 4 and 1 half, 5 years old. And really just blossomed from there, just through natural curiosity, I guess. Just I started violin. And that progressed to doing music camps during the summer. And

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eventually in middle school, I picked up the guitar and started taking lessons, probably when I was around 12 years old. And then, yeah, just, it's, it just becomes something who you are and you just identify with it. So I guess you don't really think about, I, I've been playing music for, you know, since I was four years old. So

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I think something that's been really awesome is just being able to be curious and be able to expand beyond violin and guitar and then going over to viola and then picking up jazz piano in college and playing in multiple music groups. I don't necessarily see myself as a lead singer, but I

was in Gonzaga's a cappella group for four years. I was the music director my senior year. So it's always been a part of my life.

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And it still is today. We have a, I'm in a eight person funk band down here in San Diego. And we have a, we have a show on Friday. Oh, I wish I could go so fun. Yeah. You're going to be close. You're going to be in LA. Yeah. More in the Ventura area. So, okay. Well, you guys have, you and Mike have seen one of our shows before, right? Or is that just Mike? Mike has, I never have. It's very upsetting.

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to me. Mike's seen a couple of our shows back in the day. He's shown me videos. You guys are great. Thanks. Yeah. We'll have to get you down here at some point, but yeah, that's, that's been music is my life. Do you feel music is a language? Because to me, it seems like something that I can't speak by not being a musical person. I can appreciate music as a listener, but I really,

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think there's just something so much more potent about being to create, to express yourself in that medium and having that shared connection, for example, with your brother. Do you feel it's almost like speaking a language together or does that not that imagery not really resonate? No, it does for sure. I think you could think of it in multiple ways. It's, you know, you don't need to know how to write or be able to read music to know.

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the quote unquote language, you know, music is something that we all feel and we all feel differently about it and in different ways, we're able to just utilize or be able to tap into that, you know, whatever that is for you. For me, yeah, music is 100% a language that I've been playing music with my brother for, you know, in various bands for probably over 20 years. And

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It does get to a point where you don't need any type of verbal cues. You could just look at it. You can look at each other. You can look at their fingers. You know, what's coming. You could pick up on some cues for sure. Just from being able to play with each other for so long. I think one of the biggest on your take, how you said music being a language. When I was a senior in, in high school.

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I was playing the violin and they read in treble clef. So basically, let's say it's like reading in English, the English language. And then prior to switching, prior to going to Gonzaga, I ended up switching to viola, which is very similar. It's played the same way on your chin, except you read in alto clef. So it's like reading in Spanish as opposed to English.

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And so that was actually a really challenging transition, especially from high school to college and also switching from violin to viola and having to deal with that, the treble cloth to alto cloth and new music and new director, new orchestra, reading the new cloth. So that was definitely a challenge. I can't believe you took on something. Cause already so overwhelming. I was so overwhelmed with the transition from high school to college period. So.

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dang that you threw more at yourself. Very hard. Yeah. My music teacher, she actually recommends doing that usually a little earlier than how I did it, but violins are kind of a dime a dozen, no offense to the violinists out there because I I'm still one, but violists are a lot more rare. And so for that reason, you're able to usually fish out a little bit of a better music scholarship that way. So it's kind of a backdoor. Yeah.

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And does she recommend just pushing yourself to essentially speak different languages by switching or is it more of a competitive edge? It's both. Definitely. Yeah, definitely competitive edge. But then also it's made me such a better musician. Totally. I bet. Not that I read alto clef all the time now, but yeah, I'm fluent in another musical language, so I understand it. Yeah.

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I'd probably say both aspects definitely. That's cool. And when you, I mean, music is so emotional. I think it's almost another sense, you know, the five senses, it can really, you know, when you smell something particular, it brings up a very visceral feeling. And when you hear a certain song, it triggers a certain memory. And so do you process your emotions through music at all? Yeah, yeah, 100%. And

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I, I'm trying to think of an example, but yeah, I mean, I feel all of us can hear a certain song and that song will evoke some type of emotion. I feel pretty much anybody can do that. I think maybe to the degree that it's felt might be different. Yeah. But yeah, I guess I can't really specifically think of a, of an example. For that, but I definitely agree with that sentiment. Yeah. And I don't even think.

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I was fishing for an example. It's just, is it therapeutic for you if you're feeling stressed or a certain way when you have, you know that you're going to spend time with your band or if you just want to mess around on your own, does that help? Is it cathartic? Yeah, it's very cathartic. I mean, you could take one look at my voice memos on my phone and you know, I have thousands of voice memos, which, which are just, you know, guitar riffs.

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piano melodies, me humming, me beatboxing a beat that I really like. Or so, I mean, I feel that's definitely a form of therapy, I suppose, but it's just something that's, I don't know. It's nice to have the phone to be able to use that kind of like a little diary because, you know, you could find a song that will remind you of a specific moment that you would have never thought about if you didn't have that song. So I think it's really beneficial to do that.

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Yeah. I just think it's, it's such a beautiful, like you said, diary and way to express yourself that I'm personally envious of. I took piano lessons when I was in third or fourth grade and I was actually fired by my piano teacher for having an attitude problem. I don't know if this cracks or resonates at all, but yeah, I didn't want to do my theory homework. Oh, you had to actually do homework. I was not interested. I just want to play. I don't want to do any.

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writing homework and she did not appreciate that. But I saw my peer group later in high school, the beautiful things they could put together. And I did feel a sense of sadness that I didn't stick with it because it's almost like a loss. I could have really cultivated that. Well, you also, you do other things to get similar emotions or be able to like, can you, and I haven't even really,

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asked you about it, but I'm really curious about your, your marathons that you ran. Yeah, I do feel you could make some parallels there to me. I'm just like, well, that's not the same at all. You're creating a piece of art. Whereas I'm just, you're a badass. You ran two full marathons and you qualified for Boston. You got to give yourself credit. I want to hear about it. I do. I do. And yes, I am very proud of myself.

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Michael and I both had goals to qualify for Boston and we did, and we're going to run next year and it's going to be very cool. And so I do feel proud and accomplished for setting a goal and achieving it. But I think it's more methodic, not methodical, but it just feels very prescribed. And



for me, at least if I just break down a big goal, I know I can chip away at it and I'm not discounting it. I think it's still something I'm very.

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happy that I did and I acknowledged that not everyone could do that. But I wouldn't say it's the same as having a creative outlet for me. I think writing is my therapeutic method where I just need to get my feelings out by getting them on paper. So that's more of my, my diary, my, my physical diary of similar to your voice notes. Yeah.

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What, cause you said that you write, but what made you, cause I know you've kind of had this idea of doing a podcast, but you kind of were dragging your feet on it, but what was kind of the, the last straw that was like, all right, my foot's down, I'm going to do this. What made you start? Yeah. So it's funny. I was just emailing a woman who was, who has.

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a beautiful newsletter and she's a person that I used to work with and she's been one of my big inspirations of just sharing your words publicly. And so I reached out to her after she self-published a book and I told her how awesome it was and she we started a friendship and she told me she asked me you know what is your dream scenario. And I said I always feel silly saying this but to be Oprah which is

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It sounds ridiculous to say, but she just had a talk show where she got to be really vulnerable with people and go into topics that she found relevant. And she touched on so many things that helped so many people. So she is a healer, even though she's not, she doesn't have a PhD. You know, she did something that helps people. And so that's my ideal day would be to be Oprah. And so the closest I can get is a podcast. I love having these conversations. I find it so fulfilling. It's so interesting.

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diving into how people make decisions and what makes them tick. I just think that's so cool. And then to finally actually do it a few weeks ago, or I guess in March, I was emailing with another person who has a blog that I really admire and I reached out to him and said, you've been a big inspiration for me. And he basically was like, get off your ass and get out of your own way and stop letting your ego prevent you from doing it and what's stopping you. And so I finally made the blog. Published.

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a podcast that I would, two episodes that are, or episode that I was sitting on, I had recorded it, but I was too scared in my perfectionism. So I finally was just like, I'm just gonna get it out there because that's gonna feel good. And it has felt good. It's scary, but it feels good. Yeah, I bet. You keep saying vulnerable and I've said that a couple of times too, but like that's, that really is how you dig deeper. At least that's how I'm finding just being vulnerable.

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being open and it's kind of hard to not care about the end result. Cause what my Enneagrams of three or, you know, and, you know, but it really isn't, I guess this can correlate to music as well, but you know, if, if we are all focused about the end result for a song, you know, is that, is that really what matters is the end result? How does that song sound? How does that song feel? Or is it the process? Is it.

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the creation, is it the steps that you put together? Is it the mindset that you put yourself in to just think of a riff? I mean, I think it's, I think it's that. I think if you're able to disconnect the result with the process and just look at you are doing, you are living, you are creating, of course, this is challenging, but at least I feel I've gotten slightly better at this. If you just look at it, this is the creative process and this

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is what it's about, it will, I think, just passively make the result better, you know, just because you're not so focused and hitting it from all angles. Yeah. That's just an observation. Oh, absolutely. I think that's one of my life's work is to try to embrace process over result. And we're in such a results oriented society. And I've been such a results chaser my whole life. And as soon as I, you know,

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As soon as I qualified for Boston, I was like, okay, now I have to run an ultra marathon, you know, it's just constantly moving the goalposts. So the marathon is a bit more difficult because that one is very results focused. But I do think the process of getting in shape and committing to yourself obviously is super important. You wouldn't get to the finish line without that process, but in life, I think it's also a presence thing, a mindfulness thing of just enjoying.

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the flow that you're in and getting there versus getting wrapped up in the outcome. Yeah, the flow. Yeah, it's challenging. And I think there's just so many distractions. Yeah. And there always

has been, there always has been to wherever generation you're in and to each of their own. But for us, there really is so much distraction. There's so much content. Everyone's...

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You're on Twitter, you're on Instagram, you're on blogs, you're on YouTube, you're driving and you see ads, you you're on the radio, you're listening. And it's, it's so much. And it's always, especially for people like you and me, Kendall, it's, you know, we're optimizing, optimize, optimize, optimize. And it's, we're always looking how we can better ourselves or just put a lot of pressure on ourselves to have a good end result, whatever that is and.

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I think it's just, it's very challenging to slow down, focus. It's okay to put on blinders and just execute your routine. Just do, do what you need to do so that you could find that flow, whatever that is for you. But yeah, it's, it's, it could be overwhelming. There's so much noise. There's so much overstimulation. It's really hard to just sit with yourself and I'm finding it very challenging to look in the mirror and be like,

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What is it that I want? Because I know I don't want this thing that I've been chasing or been told to chase, but it's very hard to actually write your own playbook of what you do want. At least I find. Yeah, I know it is. I mean, I think a lot of it, I at least, I mean, I struggle with it every day, but it's trying to just focus in on a routine that makes you feel happy. Really just.

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I feel the distractions and the content is so in your face and so aggressive that you need to attack your routine with, with as much aggressiveness because if you don't, then it's really easy to succumb to that pressure and you know, and then feel bad and start asking questions about yourself. And I feel like attacking your routine, whatever that is for you, you know, waking up at six thirty, going to the gym, not looking at the phone until.

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eight and then you work from eight to eight. You know, people have their own routines, but I tell myself this all the time. It's okay to just put your blinders on and not, you know, it's okay to not optimize, optimize, optimize. What's the next Twitter thread? What's a really, you know, it's hard because I want to continue to learn, but at some point it's all right, well, let's shut it down and see what I could. I almost feel oversaturated from others. You know, it's what do I, what am I even capable of? Or.

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What do I want? When you say put blinders on and focus on your routine, is there something that comes to mind that you're trying to build or focus on instead of getting bogged down in the self-improvement game? Yeah, yeah, for real, it is a game. I think it's more so just my mindset. I mean, I'm very busy. I mean, we're all busy. We all could say that. I think it's just my mindset within everything. It's easy to get.

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down or sad about something, or, you know, we do put a lot of pressure on ourselves to quote unquote succeed, but why? What, what, what is, why do we need to succeed? Just asking why, what is important? Why are we asking these questions? I think just trying to dig deeper and then you need to be vulnerable with yourself and ask these questions and have these kind of dialogues within yourself and try to figure out what's truly, truly important to you.

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And I know for me, it's prioritizing my relationships with people. And that's why, that's why I'm constantly calling friends, reaching out. I'm trying to travel. I'm trying to strengthen these ties that I've had because I've found that whenever I do, I feel good. And it's something that I don't need to think about in a lot of other things in life, and I'm trying to optimize, optimize results, results. Yeah. I might not.

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I might feel good if I, you know, get a result that's, you know, whatever it is, I achieve something, but it always leaves me feeling a little bit empty. But when I'm focusing on my friends and I'm focusing on others, I feel fulfilled. Yeah, that's a takeaway for me majorly in this time that I'm not working where I'm really ruminating on myself and trying to get it right. And I don't know what that means, but

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The minute I step outside myself and go volunteer, spend time with new friends, I feel so refreshed and it just all makes sense and I'm just very fulfilled versus if I'm spending time spinning out about my shortcomings, it's just, who is that helping? I don't know, sometimes I think there's value in being super self-aware and hard on yourself, but I'm...

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learning to balance that and be like, who is that really benefiting? You know, you think you're growing, but maybe you're not by doing that. You know, maybe you're holding yourself back. Yeah, it's all very strange. Life is very peculiar. Humans are humans, right? The human experience. Do you feel, does this ever come up for you? A sense of.

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Inequality and your friendships often, are you the one reaching out and do you ever feel resentful about that or do you just give and you're just more positive and you're just, I'm going to send out the vibes that I would like to receive. Does that ever come up for you? It does, but I feel it's the way you look at each friendship because. It's every friendship isn't equal. It's not like a scale from zero to 10.

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It's, it is a feel, it is a vibe. And I feel the friendships that, that I have everyone, it's, it's kind of just something that's understood because I mean, um, well, you could take Mike, for example, um, your, your husband, he, me and him, we have our own discord channel and we talk here and there, but honestly, I talk to a lot of other friends more often than Mike. Now that's just kind of.

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at the built-in groove that we've kind of established. And yeah, it is an interesting, it's interesting to think about that. But yeah, I don't think a communication once a week is any different from a communication once every two months, as long as that relationship is already established and there's already just an understanding between the two people. But it is interesting to think about.

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Yeah, I mean, I don't really think of it in terms of comparing frequencies because I totally agree that it's you can have a really wonderful conversation less frequent than talking to someone more frequent and it doesn't put one above the other. I was more after do you ever feel you're putting more into a relationship than you're getting back? And I'm not trying to poke you and make you feel that way. But I sometimes feel that way when I'm the one making more of an effort. And like you said, friendships are not all balanced. And

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You shouldn't, I shouldn't probably have that perspective, but I don't know if, if that ever comes up for you. I feel that's natural. I mean, sure. I've definitely been in or I've had friendships where, yeah, I'll, you know, call them or text them or something. And then, you know, no response or just it seems it's one sided where I'll be the initiator and then once I initiate, then it's all good and I don't hear from that person, they rarely, yeah, exactly. And yeah.

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That's just the way it is. That's an understanding. And the fact that I would continue to initiate, as long as that other channel is open the other way, I don't really think of that, or I don't really have any resentment. That's just how some friendships are. And I'm sure there's some friends that might feel like that for me. Maybe I don't reach out, and maybe I just don't, I haven't realized it, because that's just the way the friendship is. Yeah. But yeah.

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No, that's, it's interesting to think about that, but yeah, just friendships come in all different sizes and you know, it's yeah, I think just prioritizing them and. And yeah, I think you have an excellent way of not keeping score. You're very much fluid and you don't seem to have.

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I mean, everyone has their days where they're frustrated, but it seems you don't hold grudges. That seems like something that's pretty important to you. Does that seem accurate or? Yeah, I'd say that's accurate. If it's, if whatever I'm doing or going to feel doesn't benefit me, then I just try to let it go. I've learned that the hard way and I'm sure I've lots more to learn about it. But yeah, I think I've come to the point.

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I'm 31, about to be 32 this year. If there's a feeling or something that I don't like, then I'm just going to try to address it and then just completely eliminate that feeling and, or if it's a person from my life and so be it, but you know, we ain't got time for that. Well, yeah, I just think. Instead of getting more of the take a machete to your friendship list, you know, it seems you're, you're better at evaluating, you know, do I want to feel.

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I don't know. I was just listening to this podcast where they interviewed an author saying how to break up with your friends. And she wasn't just encouraging you to cut off all your friends, but she was saying that friendships, it can be a little bit different because we don't really have the language for conflict in friendship, you kind of just assume your friendships should be steady. At least this has been my experience where.

36:06

If you just have a long-standing friendship and you haven't really had a blow up or you haven't had to discuss really hard things, something can kind of build if something's bothering you and you don't know how to address it. I think that can just be difficult. So it sounds like you do a good job of one, not taking things personally, and then two, really letting go of things that aren't serving you. Whereas I tend to...

36:32

nourish my grudges sometimes and give them too much energy. And, and it doesn't benefit me by any means, you know, it only hurts me. Yeah, I mean, I think it's sometimes hard to do just because I think just naturally, those types of feelings are, I mean, they are, they do have an addictive quality. Sometimes it does feel good to, to have those kind of

37:00

not so good feelings and to, you know, kind of dwell in that. But yeah, I guess I just, I just try to completely eliminate that. I mean, not avoid because some things you can't avoid, but at least again, be vulnerable with the people that you care about if it's not reciprocated, then. Kind of reassess that friendship. And if it's something that you don't want, then bye. Yeah. Do you feel you're a deaf?

37:28

at conflict, addressing something if it isn't working for you? Say that again. Do you feel you are comfortable with conflict with friends and being able to address something in a way that's not going to hurt their feelings? I mean, in a way that's going to be constructive versus pointing blame? Do you feel that's something you do well? I wouldn't say, yeah, I probably wouldn't say comfortable, but I think I'm getting better at...

37:57

just being aware. And then from that awareness, just being able to be vulnerable, there you go again, and be able to have that conversation. And because in the end, being vulnerable will be, I don't think there's an example where vulnerability is a bad thing, because if it ends up being whatever result it is, at least you're being completely truthful, you're being aware, you're being vulnerable.

38:27

in this situation. So I definitely not comfortable. Yeah. I don't think anyone's comfortable with conflict. Yeah. Because it is awkward. It is awkward ever having these conversations. But I think even talking to you right now and just being open and you starting this podcast and your blog and everything, these are steps that you're doing to be open with others. And it's going to translate and probably help you grow in the real life. You know? Yeah.

38:56

I do try to tell myself if I'm feeling a little bit slighted that I just want to be the friend that I want to have. And so even if I don't feel a friend is showing up for me in the exact way that I want them to, I just try to stay in my, I tell myself to try to stay in my integrity instead of projecting or

anything like that. Yeah. It's hard too, because we're talking about structured things and like it get overwhelming. Just.

39:26

trying to have a mode for every type of feeling that you're feeling. And sometimes it's just nice to just let go of everything. And we're talking about routine and distractions and how to address uncomfortable moments or this and that. But I don't know, I think in the end, it's like, I'm really trying to just be able to live in a state where all of this is kind of just happens naturally. I think that's kind of the goal because it's exhausting trying to, you know.

39:55

Optimize, optimize, optimize, figure things out, how to address things and kind of always having that active mind can be really exhausting. So I'm looking forward to whenever that happens, just being able to not have to like actively think about these, I guess, quote unquote strategies and just kind of live. You're looking forward to it. Are you getting there soon? Is this happening? Honestly, sometimes I feel I'm getting more enlightenment.

40:24

moments here and there. And also just, I don't really care about what people think, which is a big, I think, hurdle. At least it was for me, especially with the things that I'm involved in. A lot of it is like, or even at work presenting or anything. It's just, I'm going to do me and not really try to worry about anything else and anything that comes from that. So I feel like it's maybe making

40:52

some steps, but how about yourself? Are you meditating? It sounds like you've been meditating. Yeah. I think just even not even like purposefully meditating, but I guess just awareness and breathing. Yeah. But doing that throughout the day in random moments, even if it's during a work meeting or if it's on the stage, having three seconds to yourself, where you just kind of black out and breathe.

41:21

Not physically blackout. Can't do that. You do that on stage. You take a deep breath as you're performing. And it's not planned, but I've been very much aware that I need these five second, like I guess I could call them like little blackout moments or meditation moments, maybe it's a nicer word, but where you're just, you're very, very

41:49



intentional about it and it's just for, I mean, it could be I guess anything for anybody, but for me, it's just a breath like just deep breathing looking at if I'm going outside, I guess it's just being present. So it's not in relation to performing when you say bookends like in five like breaths that you need. That's something you just try to practice in any activity that you're doing. Yeah, any, any, any...

42:16

Any activity, I guess, just music came to my mind. So I said it, but yeah, like the last show I was able to, I guess, have a moment, it's having a moment with yourself, but it's just taking that step back and having your moment. But if you're able to do that throughout the day and not just like, okay, I'm going to a hot yoga and I have 45 minutes to myself, that's great. That's cool. But trying to space them out and little mini power packs throughout the day. It's like, it's really helped me to have more focus and just really

42:46

putting energy in the things that really matter. Yeah, it's like a fuel station where it's just like, I'm gonna take in some fuel real quick and it's just focus. Yeah, that's a good way to put it. Do you meditate or do you do any type of, I know you and Mike are like super healthy and doing the, are you guys doing the cold plunges and all that still? So yes, cold plunging, yes, after. That's been really cool. And definitely something I wouldn't have done

43:16

Michael's push. It was really hard when it was like January and snowing and he wanted me to get in there and it was freezing. But it was really cool to see yourself overcome a mental hurdle where you're just like, I really do not wanna do that. And then you're just doing it. And once you've committed, it's really uncomfortable, but it feels good to know that you are mentally tough and you can just do something uncomfortable. So that was cool. Now that it's so nice out.

43:45

It feels much more lovely to get in a cold plunge. It's still cold. Don't get me wrong, but it's not like before where you're just like, the last thing you want to do is be in a swimsuit and get in a tub of freezing water, whereas it sounds much more welcoming now. So that, yeah, I think we've done a good job of trying to push ourselves and do things we wouldn't ordinarily do.

44:09

But I don't have a regular meditation practice, even though I know that's something that's blaringly obvious that I need to be doing. It's hard. I think it's hard. Yeah, it's hard and also putting that pressure and being like, I need to meditate instead of like, that's challenging. Mm-hmm, yes. And that's definitely how I've structured it. I was like, I should be doing this. I should

be working out. I should be this. And I got really into bullet journaling the past couple of years. And so I would make a little grid

44:39

all the habits I wanted to do every day and I would check them off daily if I did them. And it was like, you know, I can just say I meditate, floss, eat clean, all these things. And so every day I kind of felt like a failure because there's no way I was doing all of those things every day. And so I'd feel good when I got to, I get a little high when I get to check a box like that. It really helps me. But at the same time, it made me feel kind of terrible about myself. And so I've stopped doing that. I've stopped tracking.

45:09

things so religiously and that has helped free me but it also has kind of left me feeling a little untethered because I used to be such a tracker and now I'm like where are the days going? Yeah, is there a middle ground to that? The metrics. Is there a middle ground to that? I think that's the title of my memoir. It's just so hard to be in the gray. I have a very black and white mind. You're either all or nothing and that's something I'm trying to get more

45:39

Some days are good, some days are bad. You can't be perfect every day. That's not a realistic standard. And so don't berate yourself for your humanity. Yeah, I, to kind of how my brain works as well, just being able to check off boxes is very satisfying. So I still, I'll make a to-do list on Sunday night. And then actually this, I guess pertains to like prioritizing relationships too, but I'll do my...

46:06

do list and then I'll make a list of people that I should call, should call, not have to call, but should call. Maybe that helps too, or want to call just because it's maybe been a little bit or been a while, but I'll do that. And then I'll try to write down one fun thing that I really want to do that week and that's kind of my Sunday routine. And then throughout the week, I will get that, you know, check bar, check box. Hi, you know, doing something, but.

46:37

I kind of found it's, it's structured enough where it makes my inner nurse satisfied. But then also it gives me a lot of flexibility to be like, well, it's not broken down in the day. It's, you know, it's not a need to call list. It's should call or want to catch up lists. So I think also how you kind of phrase things for yourself, it's kind of like trying to fool yourself. That's kind of been a nice balance for me as opposed to Monday, this, this, this, this. Oh, I didn't get that done.

47:06

failure. That's kind of been a nice middle ground for me. I love that. I'm stealing that and just being more okay with a weekly to do instead of, because every day I just roll over my same list and it feels very stressful. And I'm just like, yeah, I also love that you make a list of people you want to connect with. I think that's very intentional. And then also having a fun thing on there. That is lovely, because my to do list is so on fun, you know.

47:35

It's never a fun thing. You gotta fun it, fun it up. Yeah, fun it up. But it also makes, if I've made a clear intention to myself that I'm prioritizing relationships, I'm going to need to do something above average or slightly extraordinary to be able to do that better than the normal person, then I feel like this is a good way to do that. And it's not very stressful either. And it's easy, text messaging, FaceTime, it's so easy to do it. But then I think,

48:04

sometimes being vulnerable and reaching out is a hurdle and it's the obstacle when. It really shouldn't. And if you just kind of keep trying to break that down, it'll come to a point where it's just maybe flat ground. That makes sense. It's beautiful because it sounds like you are really living your values. You know, you said, if that's my highest priority, I have to act that way. And that's something I really struggle with. Cause I think I have these.

48:32

these high ideals of who I think I am, but sometimes I don't think I'm doing the daily activities that align with that. And I can't think of a specific example, but they're there. And so I think that's really lovely that you can point to that and say, hey, my relationships are my highest priority. And that's why I make that concurrent to-do list next to it of people I wanna connect with. So you're really putting your money where your mouth is. I love that. I think a lot of that has to do with purpose and...

49:01

Yeah. Having that kind of conversation or thoughts with yourself is like, what's, what's like my quote unquote purpose, which isn't like an easy answer. And I think it probably takes a full lifetime to actually figure out what your whole purpose is. But I think that's something I struggle with is, you know, what's the purpose of doing all of these things, but if you're able to hone in on a couple of. Line items, if you will, I think it makes that question a little bit easier.

49:30

I mean, I know we're all struggling with what's the purpose. What are we doing here? What are we supposed to, right? Like, why? What's it all for? And then I think we also get really distracted with all these other things you talked about. It's easy to get sucked into this stuff. And it's like, why? But why am I doing all of this? Yeah, why? Why does my mind go this way when this happens? Why, and why is that important? Why, why, why? It's going back to being a little baby. It is.

49:58

Yeah, this guy who I really admire, Kay, he, his podcast has inspired me for years and he just started a new one, but he, he quit his corporate job and became a blogger and he runs boot camps for other executive type people who want to get out of the rat race. And he, he packaged that in productivity courses because a lot of times he gets very existential, which is why I relate to him. But.

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He thinks a lot of the obsession with productivity is a fear of death. Why do you want to be more productive? He asked that question five times to people in this course. And then you get to the core belief of because I am worried that I'm not valuable or because I will not be loved or, you know, those core needs that we feel as humans. And so it's funny because we hide behind these external things and we all want to be more productive, but why ultimately what is driving that?

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It could be different for other people, but a lot of core fears are there. Yeah, it really is. Like why do we need to be productive? And what does productive look like? You know, right. I mean, it is different for everybody, but if you're working for the man or you're working for, you know, so-and-so company, then, you know, they have, you have to be productive to serve their purpose. And that's usually not your life's purpose, right? It's kind of a...

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It means to an end, but yeah, interesting things. And just always for me conflating my purpose with my work, at least that it's been something that I have struggled with in the past and I'm still thinking I'm getting pretty caught up on that when I'm trying to think about what I want to do next. I'm, I'm in this paralysis because it has to be the right thing and it has to be aligned with my purpose. And I don't think that's always true. I think that can be really nice, but I think.

51:55

We are more than just what we do for money and capital to survive in this world. It'd be lovely if it was aligned with our individual unique purpose. Yeah. One of my friends, because I was kind

of just lamenting to him many times just, you know, my job, and, you know, I'm looking to get out of it, and this and that. And then he just was like, yo, man, sometimes it's just a job.

52:23

We have all of these thoughts in our minds, especially like you and me, Kendall, like we're hyper thinkers, we're always analyzing things, but like sometimes it's just a job and you work your job. And then outside of that, you're able to, you know, explore deeper and dig deeper. Um, and that really helped. It was just like, man, like, Oh, I guess he's right. Like so many people don't have the option to even think if they want like a job.

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or like a specific job, they're just thrown into it and that's what they do to live. You know, now we have the ability to pick a job that we want that will pay pretty dang good. We'll be able to support the life that we want to live. You know, and it's like, I personally, I'll still find a way to kind of bicker about my situation or like always, maybe not bicker, but like find holes in it and always want to kind of, you know.

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get higher and sometimes it's just a job. I don't know, like that helped me. Yeah, and not over identifying your worth with it, you know, and just being like, you know, because I want it to seem prestigious to other people. I want like them to respect me through my job. I want to be important. And it's kind of like, why do we want to be productive? Why do I want to be important? Cause I want to be accepted and loved and revered and I want people to think I'm smart and all these things. And it's like,

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Does your job have to say those things about you? Not necessarily, because I know wonderful people who do things that are, I don't know, beneath them maybe, you know? They just don't need to be using their skills that way. Like people are so much more than their jobs. Yeah, and it's also easier to be able to show that purpose and have that like love with like relationships, like outside of work.

54:19

I think that's always challenging. Like it's, it is challenging. It is hard to show your quote unquote, we're in a job. And I think that's intentional. Um, how the system is set up because that makes us all try to eat each other's head off and optimize, optimize, optimize and produce, produce, produce. Um, and it's just exhausting. And I think that's the way the system's meant to be. So if you're able to at least have that awareness.

54:48

say, okay, this is a job, this is just a job. And then, which is hard to do. I think if it didn't take- But then be able to tap out. Yeah, sorry to interrupt. I think it didn't take so much of our days. Like if we weren't so attached to the 40 hour work week, it'd be easier for that. But it takes up so much of your life that I'm just like, if I'm gonna spend 40 plus hours a week, my best waking hours, I want it to be something that matters. So it's hard because there's that push and pull of like,

55:18

A job is just a job, but it also is my whole life. No, no, that's spot on. It's spot on. It makes it that much harder to be able to like separate those emotions. Yeah, totally. Yeah. If only it was as easy as reading a Tim Ferriss is four hour work week and just, you know, going out on the beach and, you know, logging into some account and spending an hour and then you're good. You know, right. I know. I really do wish we could get away from the 40 hour work week and just like

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produce work as needed, but I know it'd be really hard to manage, but I do wish we could just abolish it and just people waste so much time. I think we're kind of going that route like college now is not as important as it used to be. People are more focused on skills. What can you do? What can you produce for us? So I think slowly but surely it's going to be turning that way, but of course it's going to take a long time.

56:17

the system in place has been around for so long. Totally. We need complete destruction. Yes, let's burn it all down. Burn it down, please. I know we're running over an hour and so I want to be respectful of your time, but one thing I want to go back to is you talked about.

56:37

how your brain is constantly optimizing and it can be really exhausting. And I relate to that deeply. Michael's always like, just turn off your brain and go to bed. And I'm like, easier said than done. My brain doesn't just shut off. I'm so constantly trying to reassess how a situation went, how it could go better. And I waste a lot of time in my own brain on things that don't matter. And so it sounds like you're actively being intentional about removing

57:07

yourself from that dialogue that you've fed before. How are you, like how have you gotten to this place? Talking about it, like how we're doing now with other friends, other people. But I

think that there's, yeah, I don't know, like the whole thing content, like there's so much content, content's everywhere. And then just being okay with being left out of the loop on things. Like.

57:36

So that means like not being as active on social media, not having certain social media accounts really helps kind of put those blinders on. Or if you do use it, you use it with upset limitations instead of just scrolling and looking down and then, oh my God, 45 minutes went by because that happens super easy because that's how it's made.

58:03

So I think it's social media, which is kind of a given. And then I think reading, and obviously you're like, probably the number one bookworm that I know. So that's not, that won't be hard for you. But, and not like, not just reading, but getting away from the self-help books, from Tim Ferriss, from, I love the guy, but you know, it's just, it's so overwhelming. I-

58:32

I love historical fiction or autobiographies, biographies. I love reading those types of books because it just gets you into a different world. It gets you just out of there. I think that's probably one of the biggest strategies or tactics that I use to help combat all that social media content optimized mindset.

59:01

Is just being able to pick up a, you know, a fiction book, um, or an autobiography about, you know, so-and-so, I think that's something that's been helpful. And then of course, just putting limitations on, um, certain things that could be distracting, such as social media and all the other stuff. Yeah. So it sounds like you're embracing pleasure, just like not productivity.

59:27

You know, raw pleasure. Yes. Yeah. Pleasure. Of course, music is there for me listening to music, um, putting on my nice Bose headphones, closing the door, turning everything off and just listening to an album front to back. Yeah. That's beautiful. And for the 40 to 50 minutes that I'm doing that it's like, that's the essence of being in the, in like the moment, you know, so I think again,

59:56

That's the process, which is what it's about. And then in the end, yes, like you've listened to the album, but it's that whole process of just listening, of reading, of going on my morning walks without a phone in my pocket. Right, yeah. Little things like that, that can make a huge

difference, I think. I notice when I'm depressed, when I haven't been listening to music, because I've decided it's not.

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Productive and I'm only consuming podcasts and self-help, you know, yes. Yes. I've been there. I've been there It's hard, but sometimes you just got to Shut it out. It's so sad when you say that like it's hard to just listen to music and just enjoy music I just Like you said with all this external bombardment. It didn't used to be hard, you know I mean we were younger and we had less responsibilities, but

01:00:51

When did it get so hard to listen to music? It just kind of breaks my heart. Yeah, no, I know. And I think, again, it just kind of comes back to the machine. Right. And just kind of like we're forced what our priorities should be. And they're all totally jacked up. It's not the way it should be. So again, it's just like we're older. We have more responsibilities now. But I don't think that should stop us from having that.

01:01:21

childlike mindset of going out and looking up and seeing a bird and having enjoyment from that, it sounds lame, but, or just the, it's probably just like the most fundamental, fundamental, simple things that you can do that gives us the most pleasure. But yeah, I know that is sad. Like why, why do we even, why are we even talking about like, oh man, like sometimes it's hard to listen to.

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an album because I could be listening to this audio book about how to monetize my business better. Like it's sometimes it's the matrix. It's the matrix. And once you step outside of it, you can really see it for what it is. You know? Yes. You have those enlightenment moments, which, you know, maybe brief, but whenever you do have them, it always leaves you wanting more. And it's like, all right, what was I doing?

01:02:18

when I felt this way and then just like, or how did I, what was I doing before then and how did that lead up to that moment? I feel like trying to be able to pinpoint those little nuggets and then be like, all right, how can I like get to feel like this more? Yeah. I mean, you said it, like watching a bird, it's a fundamental human experience, such a simple thing that brings us the most joy. And I went on a walk,

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in a park near our house and I was just like, that's going to be my focus. I'm not gonna walk the dog, I'm not gonna focus on my steps and how far I go. I'm just gonna like embrace every moment. And I honestly felt like I was on drugs. I was so happy and I was just like, so present. I was just taking my time and sitting down and soaking in the sun. And I was just like, oh my God, we are just human beings who need sunlight and we need the simple things. And we've just gotten so

01:03:18

divorced from those simple things that bring us joy and pleasure and we know like we've been living for thousands of years and those are the simple things that we need to survive and thrive and we've just now we're in our little bubbles of scarcity and like looking at the screen doing everything to her screen. It's just like They all the the hip kids now they cut they're calling those hot girl walks. Have you heard about this? Oh my gosh

01:03:48

I don't really understand hot girl anything. They call them hot girl walks. I just heard about this. I was like, I've been walking way before the hot girl walks was a thing. You were the original hot girl walker. Yeah, I've been going on like my morning walks for multiple years and then I was talking to my buddy. I'm like, he's like, oh, what are you up to? I'm just like going on my morning walk. And he's like, oh, you mean your hot girl walk? I'm like, what? He's like, yeah, that's like.

01:04:17

That's a thing like all the hot girls go on walks in the morning. I'm just like, what? That's outrageous. We have to like put a term on it and like sell it and like hashtag hashtag hashtag on Twitter. Yeah. Oh, man. It's just like basic human things. We got to make it and sell it and package it somehow. I don't know. Exactly. That's actually probably exactly what happened. As long as it's getting more people out walking. Fine. Yeah. It's probably for the best.

01:04:47

That's a good point. So thank you so much for chatting with me. I learned so much about you. You seem like you're on a really good path, like you're being very intentional and I'm gonna try to steal some of your daily weekly tasks that you do to stay in your values and living in your integrity. And I just love that. So thanks for shooting the shit with me. It was fun. Yeah, absolutely. Thanks for asking me to come on here.

01:05:14

Congrats on doing this and I'm proud of you. And that's awesome. Keep it up. Oh, thanks.