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MBS ([00:00](#)):

If I say, squirrel, at least some of you will know what I am referencing. It's that delicious scene from Pixar's Up where Dug, the appropriately named dog gets distracted. Now, we've all got our squirrels. There's a whole industry in Silicon Valley hell-bent on creating squirrels, just so our attention is pulled here and there and everywhere. And it's not just about time spent on say TikTok, it's really the big question for me is how do you keep coming back and finding the focus to do the work that really matters?

MBS ([00:41](#)):

Welcome to 2 Pages with MBS, the podcast where brilliant people read the best two pages from a favorite book, a book that has moved them, a book that has shaped them. John Zeratsky has been part of Silicon Valley. He was a design



leader at YouTube and Google Ads, but his focus has changed. And as it changed, he started asking the bigger questions. And that's why I now know him as the co-author of a couple of books. One, *Make Time: How to Focus*, and the other one called *Sprint: How to Solve Big Problems and Test New Ideas in Just Five Days*.

John ([01:17](#)):

Along the way, I really fell in love with writing and using it as a way to help me extract some of the meta lessons about the work that I was doing, and that's become kind of my obsession and my mission is really helping people make time for the things that matter to them, the work that matters to them, help them focus on the things that matter. And that's really the focus of what I'm doing with this new fund as well is just a vehicle to give people the time and resources, the money that they need to take a shot at something that's really important to them.

MBS ([01:54](#)):

His venture capital fund is called Character, and John makes it his mission to help very early startups succeed. One of the best ways to succeed is to do something that is both simple and difficult.

John ([02:06](#)):

To me, the best way to figure out whether something is worth doing is to create some realistic, but incomplete version of it, something that's real enough that when somebody sees it, they aren't going to have to think too hard, they're just going to be able to react in a very real sense and say, "Oh yeah, this is interesting." Or, "I don't get it." Or, "What is this again?" And just try to make that conversation very real.



MBS ([02:35](#)):

So, you're closing the distance between the creator and the customer or the user. Now, the world can be a bit judgmental and I think it does take courage to share the things you've made and you care about, and you're invested in. So, how do you go about finding the right people to tell what's going on, to find out what they think?

John ([02:54](#)):

If you clearly define, "I'm making this for these people," and then you just go find like five of those people. You don't have to find a ton, but if you can just find five of them, A, it's not that scary because if the five people hate it, it's only five people, it's not like you announced to the world, "Look, I made a thing," and then nobody cared. But it's also very human, it's very unmediated. You can just talk to those five people and you can learn what they think.

MBS ([03:23](#)):

So, it keeps coming back to focus, the right things, the right people. And the book John chose to read take focus to a deeply human place.

John ([03:33](#)):

One of the books that has totally stood out is called Rapt. It's by Winifred Gallagher. It's this amazing book about the power, the importance, the essentialness of attention and focus, and how what you pay attention to really defines your reality to a much greater extent than what's happening to you. And she uses the example of being diagnosed with cancer. So, this was an experience that Winifred went through and just learning that even though this very bad thing was happening to her, if she consciously directed her attention toward the things that she wanted to experience, she could change her experience of life.



MBS ([04:23](#)):

Right.

John ([04:23](#)):

She didn't have to be a victim or a subject of the world that was impacting upon her.

MBS ([04:30](#)):

Yeah. I haven't read this book, so I'm interested to hear the pages you choose from it, but just as you describe it, it somehow sounds like a dance partner in some way to kind of cognitive biases, which is like how you pay attention influences the cognitive biases that you build for yourself and how you see the world.

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

Yeah. I think it was one of the first books I read that got me thinking about things like cognitive biases, about behavioral science, about this very interesting, and messy topic of why we do what we do, or why we think what we think, or why we experience what we experience? We're so privileged to be able to think about these things, but it's endlessly fascinating. And I read this book... Let's see, 2009, it came out and I must've read it shortly after it came out when I was still living in Chicago and I had been going through a period where I was... My job at Google had started to be a lot of administrative work and not so much design work. And I was really struggling with just how I was spending my time, feeling like I wasn't getting anything done, even though I was busy.

John ([05:50](#)):

And this book just really came at a perfect moment for me and sent me down in many ways, sent me down a path of all the work that I've done since then, the design sprint process, my second book, Make Time, just really trying to help





myself, and then ultimately help others apply a lot of these lessons in the science to helping us all to make better use of our time.

MBS ([06:19](#)):

I love that. I love this book being a kind of a first domino to kind of opening up doors to a bunch of other things that you've done. Well, knowing that it's about where you pay attention, what two pages have you selected? This is also a bit of a Meta-Moment. What two pages are you paying attention to about this book about paying attention?

John ([06:41](#)):

It is. And one of the reasons that I have enjoyed this invitation and getting to do this was that it gave me a reason to revisit this book and go back to it, and review it and pick out the two pages, with your helpful prompt to not just read the first two pages, because it is a well-written book. It's one of those classic sort of non-fiction, big idea books where you really could just read the introduction probably, and you would get 80% to 90% of the core message. You may not get all the references and the nuances, but I enjoyed the challenge of having to dig a little bit deeper into the book.

MBS ([07:21](#)):

Yeah.

John ([07:21](#)):

And as another just small tidbit, this was one of the first books that I read on Kindle. So, I must've gotten a Kindle for the first time because when I looked at my library, it was like the first couple of books. And the nice thing was I made some highlights in Kindle. You can highlight the text and it keeps track of it. So, I was able to go back and see what did I highlight when I read it at the time-



MBS ([07:44](#)):

That's interesting.

John ([07:45](#)):

... which was a sort of breadcrumb trail to get back to some interesting pages.

MBS ([07:50](#)):

Well, let me do a formal introduction, and then we'll hear two pages, so I'm excited. We have John Zeratsky reading Winifred Gallagher's book, Rapt.

John ([08:04](#)):

"As the expression, paying attention suggests, when you focus you're spending limited cognitive currency that should be wisely invested because the stakes are high. At any one moment, your world contains too much information, whether objects, subjects or both for your brain to represent or depict clearly for you. Your attentional system selects a certain chunk of what's there, which gets valuable cerebral real estate, and therefore, the chance to affect your behavior. Moreover, this thin slice of life becomes your reality, and the rest is consigned to the shadows or oblivion. Attention's selective nature confers tremendous benefits, chief of which is enabling you to comprehend what would otherwise be chaos. You couldn't take in the totality of your own experience, even for a moment, much less the whole world. Whether it's noise on the street, ideas at the office, feelings in a relationship, you're potentially bombarded with stimuli vying for your attention. New electronic information and communications technology continually add to the overload. By helping you focus on some things and filter out others, attention distills the universe into your universe.

John ([09:19](#)):

Along with performing the Apollonian task of organizing your world, attention enables you to have the kind of Dionysian experience, beautifully described by



the old-fashioned word, Rapt, completely absorbed and grossed, fascinated, perhaps even carried away that underlies some of life's deepest pleasures from the scholar's study to the carpenter's craft to the lover's obsession. Some individuals slip into it more readily, but research increasingly shows that with some reflection, experimentation and practice, all of us can cultivate this profoundly attentive state and experience it more often. Paying rapt attention, whether to a trout stream or a novel, a do-it-yourself project or a prayer increases your capacity for concentration, expands your inner boundaries, lifts your spirits, but more important, it simply makes you feel that life is worth living."

MBS ([10:20](#)):

That's wonderful, John. Thank you. Beautifully written. Anybody who's throwing out big words like Apollonian and Dionysian-

John ([10:27](#)):

Apollonian.

MBS ([10:28](#)):

... and I'm like, "Okay." I think that means... Apollonian is kind of the rational and the Dionysian is the more kind of emotional and sensory-based.

John ([10:38](#)):

Yeah. Yeah.

MBS ([10:39](#)):

What is it about that struck a chord for you, John?

John ([10:45](#)):



So, I think there were two big messages from this book that this passage captures together, which is, I think why I like it. The first is that your experience of the world is really defined more by what you pay attention to than by what happens to you. And she captures that with that phrase, "The universe becomes your universe."

MBS ([11:12](#)):

Yeah.

John ([11:12](#)):

So, you're filtering down from everything to just the things that are in your view. And if you're not intentional about it, it's sort of like habit formation, like it's going to happen anyway, but if you're intentional about it, then you can sort of craft it and shape it the way that you want. So, I think that's really important. And then the other thing is just this insight that paying attention makes life better.

MBS ([11:42](#)):

Right.

John ([11:43](#)):

And it sounds, I think on the surface kind of like an oversell, but I think it's really true. When you feel bad, it's because you're not immersed, it's because you're torn between a million things you're running around, you have too many meetings or emails or whatever. When you feel good, when you feel happy, content, whatever, it's usually because you're doing something that you're deeply focused on. You're spending time with your friends or your family. You're seeing things that are so captivating, you're in flow working on something you're performing or something like that. And so I really liked that part of it as well. And I don't know, I think those two things together just kind of sit as these very



complementary ideas that have guided a lot of the things that I've done in my life.

MBS ([12:37](#)):

One of the things that pops up in my head, John, as I hear that is a concern actually, which is how you decide what to pay attention to because we've all talked about kind of our own little echo chamber and our own little bubble, and the danger of just continuing to pay more attention to what you already are paying attention to and how the act of making the universe my universe becomes an active limitation rather than an act of-

John ([13:11](#)):

Expansion or possibility.

MBS ([13:12](#)):

... kind of joyful absorption or expansion.

John ([13:14](#)):

Yeah.

MBS ([13:14](#)):

Exactly. Is there a dark side to this?

John ([13:20](#)):

I think there is. One of the things that's so interesting about this book and about the research that it describes is that it is... Well, again, I'll compare it back to sort of the science of habits. It's one of these things that can have very negative effects but can also have very positive effects. And generally, not in a third-party sense, usually in a first-party sense. Like you can accidentally form some really bad habits that become hard to shake, or you can intentionally form



some really good habits. And I think that's true of attention as well. I think if you just follow the path of least resistance and you pay attention to the things that are the easiest or the most immediate or reinforce your own worldview, then I do think it can spiral to a place that is very small. That is very closed-minded that maybe isn't as ultimately satisfying as it could be, even if there is some short-term enjoyment or pleasure from it.

John ([14:35](#)):

But I think it's so important to recognize this because if you recognize it, then you can take a step back and you can say, "Wow, this attention thing, this is a big deal. Let me slow down a second and decide what I want to pay attention to. Let me decide what I want to spend time on. Let me decide who I want to spend time with, what I want to read." And the first step to doing any of that is just that awareness, I think of recognizing how powerful it is.

MBS ([15:08](#)):

Yeah. How do you figure out what to pay attention to? Like as she said, it's impossible... It's impossible to take in and you'll be overwhelmed just by all the stuff coming at you, let alone what's out in the universe. I'm curious to know how you decide, this is where I'm going to put my time, this is where I'm going to put my attention. Is there some pre-work that needs to be done, kind of pre-thinking around this? Or do you just kind of choose in the moment?

John ([15:40](#)):

I don't think I choose in the moment. My approach with attention and time are to... My approach is to structure my environment and my habits to make the easy things, the automatic things, the right things, the things that I want to do. But the underlying question is, well, how do you know what those things are in the first place?



MBS ([16:06](#)):

Yeah.

John ([16:07](#)):

And I don't think I have a great answer for that. I think it's very intuitive, and I try to... One of my principles is to engage in activities that have sort of many feedback loops or many opportunities to practice repetition, to get in reps because I learn from it. And so, I think that that pertains to deciding what to pay attention to, because if you can choose to pay attention to something, and then you can observe and reflect on what that did for you, how that affected you, then you can adjust it. You can change the environment, you can change the things that are exposed to, the habits, whatever. So, I don't know that-

MBS ([17:06](#)):

That's interesting.

John ([17:06](#)):

... I have some set of criteria or some specific goal off in the future that I'm trying to get toward by paying attention to certain things. But I do know that I'm very intentional about identifying a guess, an educated guess, like, "I think I want to pay more attention to this," or, "I think I want to spend more time on this. Let's do it a little bit, let's try it. Let's see how it goes, what benefits or costs it has," and then adapt from there.

MBS ([17:33](#)):

Right. You learn through doing the work and getting the feedback rather than just have the idea and then implement that?

John ([17:41](#)):

Yeah. And I can give you just a really small example-



MBS ([17:45](#)):

Yeah. I'd love that.

John ([17:45](#)):

... that's not about some big life-changing projects or anything, but it's literally about what I pay attention to on my phone, like what I read. For years and years and years, I've had this app, Feedly on my phone. It's like a feed reader, a newsreader. And this is a holdover from... I worked at a company called FeedBurner back in the early 2000s. That was-

MBS ([18:16](#)):

Right. I love FeedBurner. I'm old enough to know FeedBurner and more on its loss. Yeah.

John ([18:20](#)):

A lot of people did. Yeah. A lot of people did. Yeah. It was a tool that helped people who were publishing online, make sure that their content ended up in the right places using RSS feeds as this underlying plumbing. And one of the things you could do with RSS feeds was the readers could decide which feeds to follow in Google Reader or... What were the other ones called? I can't remember. Bloglines, I think was one.

MBS ([18:47](#)):

Yeah.

John ([18:47](#)):

Anyway, those products have pretty much all gone away. They've been replaced by... We just see things on Twitter or we subscribe to email newsletters, but Feedly is one that is stuck around, and because I have this special attachment to RSS, I've had Feedly on my phone for years. And I have somewhat cultivated





and curated the things that I follow, the feeds. And I don't have hundreds, I have maybe a couple of dozen of blogs and other things that I like to read. Over time, I've decided these are worth paying attention to. But I noticed a couple of months ago that I was not reading as many books as I used to, and not reading as many long articles or essays as I used to. And so, I experimented with removing Feedly from my phone, just to see how it would go, and I was a little bit sad to close that chapter [crosstalk 00:19:45].

MBS ([19:45](#)):

[crosstalk 00:19:45] it pops away and vanishes and you're like, "That's 15 years of my life have gone"

John ([19:52](#)):

Yeah. Like it never happened. Right. Yeah. And I'm sure there's probably some interesting blog posts from some people I've been reading for years that I'm not seeing, but that's just a very small example of just having a little bit of awareness and saying, "Okay. Now, I'm feeling this thing. What's a possible cause of this thing? What's the experiment I can run to see if it changes how I feel about it?" And so, I'm just kind of constantly going through those loops.

MBS ([20:17](#)):

You talked about the process of doing things that get feedback, so you can continue to make better choices whether to stay the course or not as one of your principles. Are there other principles that you hold to help figure out how to live a good life?

John ([20:33](#)):

There are, yeah. Probably, the most important principle is I don't have a pithy phrase for it, but it's sort of an orientation toward service. And I don't mean that in like a volunteering community service type of way, even though that's good



thing to do, it's great. But I just mean that I have learned that my happiness and my sense of contentment, my sense of purpose is filtered through the impact that I can have on other people. And that has informed a lot of the choices that I've made about the work that I do and doing things that are highly leveraged, and not in a financial way necessarily, although sometimes they are, but where my... I know you're familiar with this too, but where I can do something, I can create something that if it is successful, will have an impact on many people. And then those people can all take that and go and have an impact on many other people.

John ([21:43](#)):

Perhaps, it's over the grandiose, perhaps, I think too highly of myself, but I just find that sort of that orientation and then the application of leverage to be really rewarding. So, that's another one.

MBS ([22:00](#)):

Yeah. I love that.

John ([22:02](#)):

I have another one. This is sort of a mantra. Actually, I have a list of mantras in my phone that I remind myself of. And one of them is not really, I guess, maybe it's a principle, but it's a... You know the artist, Paul Madonna? He's a sketch artist.

MBS ([22:18](#)):

I don't actually know.

John ([22:20](#)):

You might know his work if you saw it, it's fairly recognizable. So, when I lived in San Francisco, I was able to walk to work and I walked... My walking path took



me through North Beach, which is the famous Italian neighborhood where the Beat movement was happening, and a lot of interesting American cultural things happened in North Beach. And City Lights bookstore is-

MBS ([22:46](#)):

I love that bookstore.

John ([22:47](#)):

... a bookstore that is will forever be associated with Jack Kerouac and the Beats. And they had a poster for a Paul Madonna book in the window of that bookstore that I walked past every day for years. And I think it was a title of a book by Paul Madonna, Everything Is Its Own Reward, and that's the mantra. So, that's one of my other principles is I find that most things, they contain their own reward. They're not in pursuit of another reward, but many, many things, even things that seem bad at first, they usually contain some inherent value. And I just try to look for that. So, that's another one.

MBS ([23:33](#)):

I love that. You talked about contentment in service of others for a sense of contentment. And you also said happiness, and you said purpose, and I hear those words often enough. I don't often hear the contentment. And I'm wondering what that word means to you?

John ([23:50](#)):

For me, contentment, it's a more stable form of happiness. It's like, if happiness is the dramatic mountain peaks and canyons and contentment is rolling hills.

MBS ([24:10](#)):

Right.



John ([24:12](#)):

So, I think it's a better target probably than happiness. I think happiness is... We're getting into very weird and obscure differences between things, but for me personally, I tend to think of happiness as a moment or the result of some relatively short-term thing, but contentment is something that I believe I can nurture and cultivate over a long period of time. And I think I can experience contentment from things that I'm not actively engaged in, whereas I think happiness tends to come more from things that I'm doing right now or sort of currently. For example, there's some companies I worked with at Google Ventures that we invested in when I worked there, I really feel like I had an important effect on their success.

MBS ([25:08](#)):

Yeah.

John ([25:09](#)):

One example is Flatiron Health, which is this amazing company that makes software for cancer clinics. And it's been years since I worked with them, so it's not a source of happiness, but I do think just even thinking about that company and thinking about the work that we did with them, it's a source of contentment. I feel like, "Wow, that was a good thing that I did. If I'd never do anything else good, I did that good thing." I feel a certain amount of contentment from that.

MBS ([25:39](#)):

I feel like I might know the answer to this, but I'd love to ask it anyway, which is part of a commitment to design is a commitment to failure and getting stuff wrong.



John ([25:54](#)):

Yeah.

MBS ([25:55](#)):

And you talked about Flatiron Health and the contentment in that and seeing the role you played in that and seeing that organization flourish, but I'm wondering how you manage the stuff that doesn't work out? How do you maintain contentment when the stuff isn't working the way you want it to work?

John ([26:25](#)):

There are a couple of things that are helpful for me. One is finding the bright spots where it did work. So, I can think of events that I've done... Actually, one that comes to mind specifically... I don't do this too much anymore, I have a business partner that I work with, but I used to lead workshops based on Make Time that were designed for professional teams, teams that work together to kind of help them get on the same page about how they think about their time and what they're paying attention to.

MBS ([27:05](#)):

Yeah.

John ([27:06](#)):

And there was one in particular that I was really excited to do because it's at a company that is quite famous, and I know some people that work there and it was a cool opportunity. It did not go well. The workshop did not go well. It was part of a couple of days of different things they were doing, and my session got low ratings relative to the others. There was a lot of pushback, negative sort of reactions to things. But there was like one or two people who actually reached



out to me afterwards and said, "That made a huge difference for me. That changed how I think about my days."

MBS ([27:43](#)):

Right.

John ([27:43](#)):

So, I try to look for those bright spots. I think that helps me a lot. And honestly, being a semi-public person in the way that you are and that I am where we're reachable online, we're on social media, I find that most people don't use those channels to tell me bad things. I'm not famous enough for that to happen, but occasionally, people do write me this really heartfelt email and say, "Wow, I read your book and it helped me with all this." Those things happen somewhat automatically, and they really help me. The other one it's related to the, Everything Is Its Own Reward. It's about trying to identify the lessons from any failure. And for me, what's really important there is to have collaborators and partners who reinforce that, or remind me to do that.

John ([28:44](#)):

So, I look for people who have that orientation, because I know that personally, I'm more of a, "It didn't work, let's move on." But if I can surround myself with people who are going to say, "Wait a second, let's slow down. What was the lesson there?" That helps me maintain contentment, even when things aren't going well.

MBS ([29:06](#)):

What have you learned about finding those people to work with? It's such a joy when you find the right people to collaborate with. I find I kiss frogs and occasionally, they pop into the right, the princess, but I've kissed quite a lot of frogs, and I'm wondering how... And you must see this also in your work as a



venture capitalist as well around the teams at work and the teams you're working with.

John ([29:41](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

MBS ([29:43](#)):

What have you learned over the years about how you find the right people?

John ([29:48](#)):

Well, I don't think it's something that I'm very good at. Most of the partnerships that I've made with people have been opportunistic. So, I don't think I'm very good at intentionally seeking out team members or partners or things like that. It's something I would like to get better at.

MBS ([30:09](#)):

Yeah.

John ([30:10](#)):

But one pattern that does stand out for me is just kind of looking for people who have done a lot of stuff, tried a lot of stuff. So, like the way that that shows up for the startups that we invest in through our fund is like, if you look at somebody's LinkedIn and it's like, they worked at Google for eight years.

MBS ([30:34](#)):

Right.

John ([30:35](#)):

It's like, "Okay, that might be a really, really valuable experience. Clearly, they're a smart person, they're talented," versus somebody who like, they co-founded a



startup, but it only lasted a year, which clearly means it failed. And then they were like an early employee at its other startup, and then they did the side project, maybe they contributed open source thing or they wrote a book or just sort of that track record of like, "You tried a lot of stuff, but you're still going, which means you probably have a pretty good attitude [crosstalk 00:31:08]."

MBS ([31:08](#)):

[crosstalk 00:31:08].

John ([31:08](#)):

Yeah. And then I try to tease that out by talking to them as well. I tend not to hit people with the, "Tell me about your biggest failure and what did you learn?" That's maybe better for onstage or something, but I just ask people to take me through, so like, "What happened? What happened next?" Like, "How did that project go?" Like, "What happened there?" And I think it's usually pretty clear what their attitude is about failure. Now, that doesn't help with the top of funnel, it doesn't help, and that's what I was saying the thing I'm not very good at is sort of intentionally finding those people, but I think once they're close to me, then I can sort of evaluate them in a pretty good way.

MBS ([31:55](#)):

Yeah. And one of the things that you're famous for is the sprint process, and you write about that in your first book. And I'm intrigued that part of what you offer in this new or company that you're part of is not just money, which is what startups want, but a process as well to help them accelerate and work on the stuff that matters. It's four or five years since you wrote that book and your knowledge of that goes deeper back in time before that. What shifted, if anything, over the years in terms of how you think about that sprint process, and what's most important about it?





John ([32:43](#)):

There are some relatively small tactical things that have changed, and it's actually been really cool because we wrote the book based on our experience at Google Ventures where we created this method and we were informed by a lot of influences and inputs, but it was our things. It was how we did it and it worked for us. And since we published the book, there are a few pieces, three pieces, in particular, come to mind where other people, people in the community, people who had read the book and were running sprints, they came up with better ways to do a part of it.

MBS ([33:17](#)):

Right.

John ([33:18](#)):

And we've gotten to know those people. We've taken their techniques now, and when we run sprints, that's how we do it. So, that's been really cool. So, there are some small tactical things like that.

MBS ([33:32](#)):

Yeah.

John ([33:33](#)):

I think another interesting change is that there are a lot more ways to test ideas. There are a lot more ways to validate whether you're on the right track. And some of it comes from tools, having better tools for creating prototypes or... There's this whole no-code movement that's all about creating products or websites or whatever without having to write any code, which is exactly what we're doing in most cases in a design sprint, it's like, "How can we make this thing without doing the plumbing part of it?"



MBS ([34:10](#)):

Yeah.

John ([34:12](#)):

So, I think that's been really exciting to expand the universe of ways in which people can run experiments, can validate their ideas. But I think that... I don't know, the bigger thing that comes to mind is just that I think that you and I would probably both agree and probably pretty much anybody listening would agree that the world is crazier now than it was in 2016, when the book came out, by whatever definition you have. And so I just think it's... And especially when teams are more often now working remotely, they're not in the same place.

MBS ([34:57](#)):

Yeah.

John ([34:58](#)):

Having a method and a process and a checklist that forces you to focus and forces you to be together as a team, even if... I don't know, even if you do all the steps wrong or whatever, just the fact that you and your team spent more than an hour together working on something is really meaningful. It was always meaningful, but I think it's become more meaningful. And that's a hard thing to lead with. It's hard to sell that as, "Look, I've got this great thing. It's going to make you spend time on something." So, it tends to be a bit of a Trojan horse, but I think it has always been a benefit that comes through on the backend but has become an even stronger benefit as the world has gotten more distracting and more fragmented.

MBS ([35:57](#)):



It feels like it's a really nice kind of shout-back or call-back to reading from Rapt and that whole piece around taking the moment to actively stay in the moment and stay focused on something opens up new worlds.

John ([36:14](#)):

Yeah.

MBS ([36:14](#)):

And in the sprint process, you're creating a structure that forces people to stay in the moment with each other and stay with the problem, and stay with the work and has the ability to perhaps create that kind of sense of that rapt, which is such a wonderful word.

John ([36:29](#)):

Yeah, absolutely.

MBS ([36:31](#)):

John-

John ([36:31](#)):

Yeah.

MBS ([36:32](#)):

... this has been a wonderful conversation. I'm wondering as a final question, is there anything that needs to be said in this conversation that hasn't yet been said?

John ([36:42](#)):

Nothing's coming to mind. I think we went to some interesting places. I appreciate your questions. They were really thoughtful.



MBS ([36:51](#)):

Thank you.

John ([36:52](#)):

So, no, I don't have anything that I wish I could have talked about. [crosstalk 00:36:56].

MBS ([36:56](#)):

Good. Are you happy? Are you content? Both? Neither? Happy and content, that was such a helpful distinction for me. I realize that creating this new book that I'm working on that will come out in January, that's been a process actually imbued with contentment. And it's also been difficult. I'm currently writing the seventh. Yes, the seventh draft of it now. And trust me, there have been times where I have not loved the writing process or sharing drafts with people and hearing back. I have no idea what your book is about. I had to abandon it after 30 pages. So, not happy, but content, I have been content in doing this work. So, where do you seek out and find contentment?

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

Look, if you want to follow John's work and I'd encourage you to do that on Twitter, it's @Jazer, J-A-Z-E-R. And he's posting summaries of books he's reading there as well, so that's worth looking at. And John Zeratsky, of course, it's his website, I spell it for you, J-O-H-N, Z, or zee, Z-E-R-A-T-S-K-Y.com. And you're a legend for listening to the podcast. Thank you, I really appreciate it. I'm hoping, you're enjoying the guests. If there's one episode or one guest in particular, that's really struck a chord for you, please share it with somebody. This podcast definitely grows by word mouth, and if you're willing to email somebody, text somebody, go, "[inaudible 00:38:39], listen to this." That might be good for them, and it will certainly be helpful for me.



MBS ([38:43](#)):

And thank you as well, if you're willing to write a blurb and a review on your favorite podcast app. I know it's a bit needy and a bit whiny to keep asking, but it really does make a difference. It helps the algorithms make sure the podcast get found, and that helps me be able to attract better and more interesting guests, even more interesting, all these guests are all pretty amazing. Anyway, you're awesome, and you're doing great.