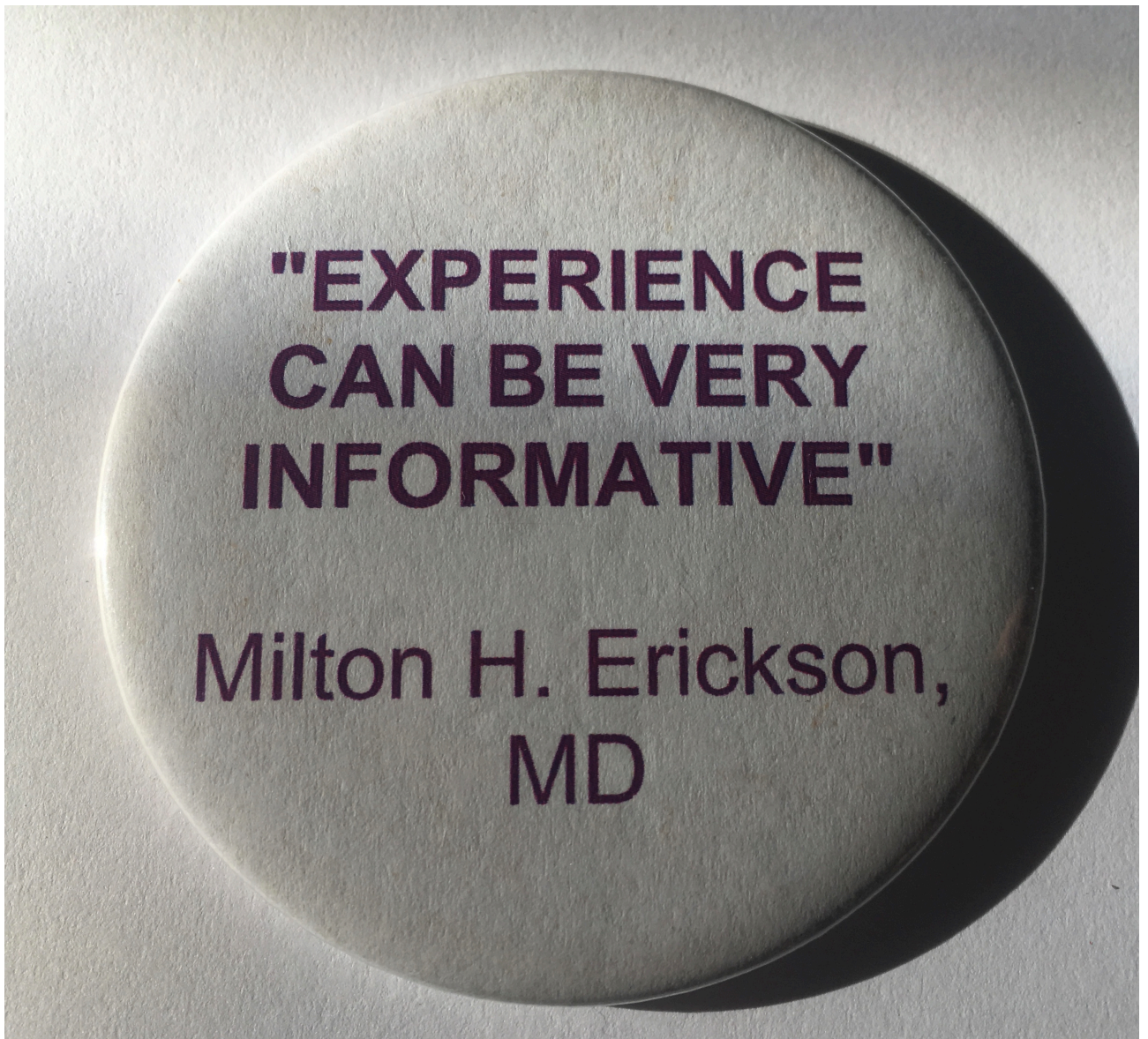


a no purpose workshop

with Rob McNeilly



Foreword by Douglas Flemons

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Foreword

In the pages that follow, you'll find a transcript of Rob McNeilly in conversation with a group of people gathered for the purpose of exploring purpose-free exploring. As you read it, you, like the participants, will have the opportunity to let down the guard of your intentional self. "Wait," you may think, if there's no purpose, what's the point? I won't bother reading it." Good idea. Don't bother while reading it. But don't wait. Read it without bother, without any particular goal driving you. As Sylvia Boorstein would say, "Don't just do something, sit there!"

If you extricate purpose from your reading of this small e-book, you'll be wading in with a wu-wei (to be distinguished from a woo-woo) sensibility. The Taoists have this concept of wei wu wei, which means to act (為) without (無) acting (為)—to act without effortful, purpose-driven drive. This orientation to engagement accords pretty closely with the effortless of flow experience that Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi talks about, and you'll see it reflected in Rob's responses to the other participants in the conversation. I expect you'll come to recognize in what he says that "purpose-free" is not the same as aimless.

Rob has an orienting spirit that guides him. He practices a lateral advancement of implicit ideas about the lateral advancement of the human condition. A wise soul with deep appreciation and clear understanding, he maintains an abiding passion for heartfelt philosophies and practices of the embodied mind. Although he stresses the simplicity of what he offers, he possesses a sophisticated grasp of human nature, of paradox and irony. Through laughter and mischief, he invites and teases out meaning in a most beguiling, refreshing way.

Douglas Flemons, PhD, LMFT
Professor Emeritus

Preamble

A good friend ran such a workshop many years ago, and I regret not going to it, so I did the next best thing and ran one myself. I've been offering this each year for several years, and some people have been to more than one.⁴

A Melbourne surgeon told me that he could get through the year's work in 11 months, but if he tried to fit everything into 12 months, he wouldn't be able to do it.

We live in a hurried, acquisitive society where more is better, but no matter how much more we get, there's always even more that we could get, and so the treadmill continues ...

Many "successful" people report a deep dissatisfaction with their life, something missing, an emptiness in their core ...

So, my wish, in this free, no purpose workshop, was to take some time, step back from the busy-ness of our lives, pause, reflect, dream ... and maybe be open to some new and unpredictable possibilities.

I didn't promise that this would happen but simply mentioning the possibility allowed this to happen for some on the call,

I'm grateful to the people who contributed to this conversation.

Rob McNeilly
28th February, 2021

Transcript

Rob: Let's just assume that if anyone wants to join us, they can at their own leisure. So, let's make a beginning. Here comes A. A and L are joining us, so let's give a moment for them to... And L is also in Melbourne, right, and A is somewhere in the States. I forget where.

L: Hi, Rob.

Rob: Hi there, L, welcome.

Hello, stranger. Good day. I haven't seen you for a while.

E: Good day.

Rob: Hello, E. Welcome. Welcome.

E: Thank you.

Rob: So, there's another couple of people joining us.

Hello, L. Welcome.

A: Hi, Rob.

Rob: Hey. Good day, A. How are you, A?

A: I'm good, thank you.

Rob: That's good.

A: I'm glad I could join you this morning.

Rob: Yeah. Yeah, I think it's a rare opportunity for you to do that. You've usually got other things going.

A: Yeah, I have been really busy, so I'm glad that I'm here.

Rob: So, this is always intriguing to me that people sign up for this. It's a no-purpose workshop.

M: Well, we are curious to know what is it. Very curious, so what's going on? No purpose. [inaudible 02:29] only to listen to you.

Rob: Yeah, well, or to each other.

M: To wisdom.

Rob: I was inspired by, decades ago, a good friend of mine, a psychiatrist in Melbourne, Bill McLeod, ran a workshop with a Buddhist monk, called a no-purpose workshop. And I didn't get to it, but I was intrigued with what it was all about, and there's something appealing to me about not having a specific purpose because often, "Oh, we're going to do this and this is what we're going to focus on and this is the outcome we're wanting."

So, I wanted to set the scene, set the mood. There's an ancient poem that says "Sitting quietly doing nothing, spring comes and the grass grows deep in the forest". And I'm also reminded of Lao Tzu's writing in the Tao and I won't say this accurately, but I'll see if I can catch the principle. He says something like, "Who can wait while the mud settles?" There's something about just sitting with some muddiness and just let everything settle so that things can become clear.

And the other comment I wanted to add here for setting the scene, that John Weakland was one of a trio of people, who started the Mental Research Institute in Palo Alto. And they had as a therapeutic principal the idea that all problems are caused by our attempt to solve them, so that all problems are attempted solutions.

So, their attitude to any problem that someone presented was to apply constraints and to do whatever they could to dissuade any client from doing anything and not making any change and they used every device that they could to talk someone out of changing. They would say, "Well, you're not ready; your family's not ready; the world's not ready for you to emerge as you really want to. So, it's best if you don't do anything. And if you have to do something, then just do as little as possible." So, they used a lot of rhetoric, a lot of persuasion to try and thwart any person's attempt to solve their problem. It's a rather cute attitude and it makes a lot of common sense.

We know that if you try very, very hard to go to sleep, that's enough to keep anyone awake, that it's been well documented that a way of gaining weight is to go on a weight reduction diet. It works every time. So, attempting to solve those two problems is sort of common everyday examples of trying to do something that feeds into the problem where doing nothing allows for something to settle, to emerge, to appear, to disclose itself.

So, I wanted to make that noise to set the scene for the often-overlooked advantage of not trying to follow a purpose, not trying to achieve anything, but instead to look at the option, the possibility of not trying to achieve a purpose; not trying to succeed at something; but simply allowing the universe to unfold in the way that it's going to.

Now, I'm not recommending this as the MRI people did as an approach to everything. Just a balancing idea because I'm informed by Werner Erhard's comment years ago when he said, "It's a problem being half-arsed whichever cheek is missing." So, if we don't have a purpose then that's one cheek that's missing. But if we have to have a purpose then again that's we're just unbalanced.

So, I wanted to set the scene with those ideas. And I'm curious about how come you wanted to give up some of your time to be in this conversation. And I'm not

going to say what was the purpose of that, but you're here for some concern, some reason that you decided that you wanted to – or is just we could just tell stories, tell jokes. I don't know.

C: Well for me, Rob, if I could just say something. It was to see if I could improve my backhand in tennis. And I think just from what you've said made me realise that the more I worry about that backhand, trying it just fails miserably.

Rob: Guaranteed. You know, Ogden Nash wrote so wittily years ago, "The centipede; When asked which; Leg it would move; Ended in a ditch." And to build on the tennis metaphor, I remember hearing from some professional tennis player, I can't remember who it was, that if you want to put your opponent off their game, you say to them, "That last serve was just marvellous. How did you do that?" And the idea was that if you can get your opponent to focus on how they did it, it messes with their game.

And as far as tennis is concerned, do you know Timothy Gallwey? He wrote a book years ago, decades ago, called "*The Inner Game of Tennis?*"

C: I've ordered it online.

Rob: He writes in there, he talks about self one and self two. It's really quite the equivalent, quite a close equivalent of Erickson's idea of the conscious mind and the unconscious mind. Gallwey says, if you're going to serve a ball, and self one says, "That's where I want the ball to go." And then say, "That's it. I know where I want it to go, but I don't know how to get it there." So, self two, it's up to you to get it there.

So, self one says, "There, that's what I want." And self two says, "Okay, I'll get it there." And it presupposes and actually helps to generate a lot of trust in the process. I have to try to improve my backhand is an expression and is an invitation to distrust your body. There's a fundamental different attitude in that [inaudible 12:33]. And all of our learning, all of our schooling, all that training is "don't make a mistake".

And one of the ways of improving your backhand, instead of trying to improve it is to practice getting it, practice doing it badly because if you really know how to do a bad backhand – whatever that means, I don't even know what that means, but you do. If you can master getting it wrong...

I remember a concert pianist telling me that when she was learning a new piece, there would be something on the third page and it was a difficult passage. And right from the beginning, she was thinking, "Oh, no. Not this." And then when they got to that ... wrong note! And she found it very helpful to practice getting that passage wrong. Once she can perfect getting it wrong, then she could just sail through it without a problem.

So, practicing our mistakes is counterintuitive, but it actually is consistent with our everyday experience.

C: I'll give it my best shot.

Rob: You best try very hard, C, because, if you do give it your best shot, you won't have any clue about how to do that.

I think Erickson understood that when he said the three most important things for us to do, the three most important things are to observe, to observe and to observe. And then the corollary to that is to utilise, utilise and utilise, but not try and do anything, not try and change anything, but simply harness the energy that's there and nudge it in a more useful direction.

So, what else is happening?

F: Rob, I just wanted to see you again because I've missed all our opportunities during the year being busy and I'm delighted to be able to sit and listen with only 99 expectation out of 100.

Rob: Is that all? Okay.

F: Yeah. I'm delighted to be here and see familiar faces and non-familiar faces. Bonsoir M, or bonjour.

M: Bonsoir [inaudible 16:08].

F: Hi, C And K.

M: And J.

F: Yes, and L. My purpose in being here, I knew that we'd be entranced from the first word and I am, but [inaudible 16:27] that someone else.

Rob: So, L has an interesting situation here. We've heard about multiple personalities, but L had multiple bodies. There were two of him there for a moment, but he's down to one body now, so there we are.

[inaudible 16:49], M.

M: Yes, Rob, I think what you are saying is very wise and simultaneously very paradoxical because as you said, I think while when you wish to go to sleep and you are really trying, you can't go to sleep. But when you are going to think about not thinking, it's not possible not to think because you are looking precisely, but the goal is not to think about anything to let the mud going down to the bottom of the bottle.

But even if you are trying to [inaudible 17:30] the mud going down to the bottom of the bottle, you are doing something. You're not thinking about anything, but still you are thinking to the process and beyond this, you may put a lot of levels of thinking. It might be physical, it might be politics, it might be some kind of literature and it might be also related to more values, or you may a lot about that, but it is not thinking about nothing is really thinking. So, I don't know how it's possible not to think as soon as you're awoken.

Rob: Yeah.

M: Maybe I'm wrong. I'm sure I'm wrong, but it's quite a challenge. But meditation, even in meditation, even I mindfulness, you are thinking a lot.

Rob: A Buddhist friend of mine, who was in training to be a Buddhist monk and he said he was going crazy with the Tibetan Buddhist training about stopping his thoughts.

M: I'm not surprised.

Rob: And he said that his sanity was saved when he came across a different Buddhist approach that was called Dzogchen. Now, I'm no expert at this, but he told me that with Dzogchen, you don't stop the thinking. You just listen to it. You just allow it to be there.

You don't try and stop it. You don't try and change it. You just allow it to be there, just like I used a couple of metaphors like watching the clouds drift across the sky, not trying to get a cloudless sky, but just letting or watching something floating down the river and the way it goes under a bridge and then just comes out the other side and just allowing those thoughts to just come. And I think Bill O'Hanlon pointed to that same kind of thing in his uniquely wry fashion when he was talking about hypotheses. He said, "Entertain your hypotheses, but don't marry them."

And I think it was the Dalai Lama that said that if you leave the front door and the backdoor of your house open so that any thoughts that come in the front door can just go out the backdoor. You don't have to close the door to keep them out. Just let them...

A: Now, I think it's interesting. I've done a lot of meditation and exactly what you were just saying then, I think when we allow anything, then it subsides the more that we try to resist something, the more that it persists.

Rob: Yeah.

A: And it's the same with our clients too. If they're feeling anger or if they're feeling anxious, just allow them to feel that fully rather than what they're doing is they're arguing with it and they're pushing it away and it's almost as if they're fighting themselves.

Rob: Yeah. If any of us push against a wall, the harder we push, the more resistant the wall becomes. If we just leave it as a wall, it's not at all resistant. So, I think you're onto something there, A, that when, if we push a client... I mentioned that Palo Alto trio. One of the others, apart from John Weakland was Richard Fisch. And he talked at one of the Erickson conferences about the use of brief therapy, what they called their approach. They called it brief therapy in everyday life.

And Dick's wife was a horse person. She used to go to meetings with her horse and jump hurdles. There was a competition of some sort, a competition. And he would go along and one of those times, his wife was riding a horse and every time it came to a particular jump, it baulked and dug in its heels, its hooves and it turned its head to the left.

So, Dick noticed this and he said to his wife, "Look, I don't know whether this will help, but perhaps you could give it a try. Run up to the, get ready for the jump and just before the horse is going to baulk, pull back on the reins and turn the horse's head to the left. In other words, don't try and force it to go over." And she said, "Oh, I'll give it a go." So, with the run-up, she pulls the horse's reins back and it turns out the horse would go over the jump.

He just got a new car, a Ford Thunderbird. And he was very enthusiastic about it and went too fast and a policeman pulled him up for speeding. And he said to himself, "I'm going to buy a ticket from this policeman. I'm going to get this policeman to sell me a ticket." So, the policeman says, "You've been speeding. Let me have your licensing." And he gives his license. He says, "Oh, you're a doctor."

"Yeah, but I'm not a medical doctor. I'm a psychiatrist."

"Oh, yeah."

Every time the policeman tried to make an excuse to let him off, Dick said, "Oh, that doesn't apply."

And eventually, after this had been going on for a number of minutes, the policeman said, "Oh, well, I'll let you off this time, but don't do it again." He couldn't buy the ticket. It's actually kind of common sense, isn't it, that it's not usual professional thinking.

There was a Canadian family therapist, Karl Tomm, who said that, "There's no such thing as a difficult client. So-called difficult clients, we call them difficult because they are doing what they are doing. We think they're difficult because they're not doing what we think they should be doing."

So, I've taken that idea and played with it and I like to think that there is no such thing as a difficult client, a resistant client. There's no such thing as a resistant client, just a resistant therapist. If the client's not responding to what we're offering, then it's up to us to change our approach so that they have a chance to respond.

R: For years, I've been very interested in the topic of purpose. One of my favourite hates is [inaudible 25:54] and I don't know what you know about her, but she's sort of one of the main ideologies behind the Harvard Business School. And she emphasises purpose very strongly. And so, I was very intrigued. And also, I'm a bit younger than you, but my state in life, I think, "Well, what am I doing with my next few years?" And I do have a sense of purposelessness, but what does organise me is getting together with people. What I do like to do is getting together with people.

A lot of thoughts have come while you've been talking. It's very good to listen to you.

Rob: Oh, really? Could you tell my wife that because she thinks I'm boring?

R: Well, I guess you should set out to bore her further.

Rob: Because when I talk, she feels like she's going to go to sleep. I'll pass that on to her and maybe she can be more respectful to me, R.

R: Oh, no. You're fighting it. Just go with the resistance.

Rob: In business, the whole purpose of business is to succeed, to sell more products, to make more money and look out for the shareholders and that kind of thing.

R: Yeah.

Rob: I remember reading about one of the pilots who dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima or Nagasaki. I can't remember. Anyway, they dropped the bomb and he looked back and he saw what had happened and he said to his co-pilot, "What have we done?" It was a shock to him to see that they had achieved their purpose. It was a shock.

So, our business depends on purpose and you need to clarify what the product is, and what need it serves and you need to have the ties so that people will realise this is going to contribute to them. And that's the purpose of business, the purpose of the business to succeed. But what is the purpose of success? That's like what you're pointing to. Yeah. "What shall the profit of man, if he gains the whole world, but loses his soul?"

R: Exactly.

Rob: Yeah.

R: I recently came across a theorist. He's a game theorist. He's a mathematician and analyses, and he categorises games into infinite games and finite games. But the purpose of the finite game is to win. It needs rules, it needs an audience, whereas the infinite game, the purpose is to sustain the game. And I like that a lot.

Rob: That's nice.

R: It's a great contrast, I think, to business where the purpose is to win and to make money to succeed.

Rob: So, it would be naïve to say, "Oh, we should get rid of business and get rid of [inaudible 29:27]."

R: Absolutely.

Rob: But there's a balance there somewhere, isn't it?

R: Yeah. There's no heart in it, is there?

Rob: Exactly. But when you talk about you're younger than me, when we're 20, we're going to live forever. We're going to learn how to fly. And then we accumulate marriages, children, houses, cars, bank balances. Some of us accumulate bankruptcies and we accumulate all kinds of things. But at a certain point,

usually around middle age, there's some kind of reckoning about "Am I on purpose".

Ashley Ashleigh Brilliant said, "By the time I got to this stage of my life, I thought I would have gotten a lot further." So, a lot of people, when they get to a certain stage in their life, there is some kind of reckoning, like, "Oh, I haven't got as far as I thought," or, "I'm not as successful as I wished," or something like that.

But I think it was Fernando Flores, Chilean diplomat, who said, a politician, that, "After a certain time, instead of accumulating and winning, there is a time for giving back. There's a time of leaving and setting up a heritage, setting up for something after you're gone." Instead of getting and succeeding, it's a matter of giving away. So, it's a good [inaudible 31:12] there's a season for everything under the sun.

L: But you always give everything away, don't you, Rob? You can't take it with you.

Rob: No, not everything.

R: That's right.

Rob: No, no. See, this is a strategy L. I think if I give enough away, people will feel guilty and then they want to give me some money. So, I'm being strategic. I'm trying to be successful.

L: Does it, you know, because we have this skewed measure of success? When you were talking about it, I just remembered one of the first clients that I had, she was an old lady. She was over 80 and she had a very sore back. She had it for 30 years. And she has gone to doctors and done all that stuff. Of course, she was on pain killers and she wasn't really walking very well. When she came, she could hardly sit down on the chair. And then we had a session for chronic pain and she could suddenly turn in the chair. She could turn around and she said, "I couldn't turn like this for 10 years."

And I said, "Well, what have you done other than just taking those painkillers?" This was after. You know, afterwards we talked about it a little bit more and she said, "I never done anything because I couldn't afford it. [inaudible 32:58] whatever. So, you have to find some balance between that. It's with purpose. As you said, you don't do anything [inaudible]. The grass will grow deeply in the forest. That's true, but you have to expect it to grow, otherwise it just... But yeah, but very [inaudible 33:47] it's a balance that you have to find, the holy grail of balance between things.

Rob: We need to succeed at that one, L.

L: Yes.

Rob: We need to succeed at not being too successful.

L: True.

Rob: Just the right amount. So, we've had to do a lot of creative listening when you were speaking because you're internet [inaudible 34:14].

L: Just the right amount. [inaudible 34:16].

Rob: We're having to be quite creative in filling in the gaps. I think there's an active creation for you to contrive that so that we could be more creative ourselves. So, thank you for that.

L: Thank you.

L: So, I can say something. I haven't heard

Rob: Oh dear. L, you froze then. Can you say that again?

L: Yeah. So, we're just responding to why we're here and what moves us about the subject is that what we're doing.

Rob: Well, some of us are, L. I don't know about you. Whatever you'd like to say, you'd be very welcome to, whatever that happens to be.

L: Okay, great. I will do that. It's so interesting to hear people because as a human being, I can relate to much of this. I just did part of a meditation retreat where the subject was what's called Chitta, which is like a version of mind. There's three types of mind in Buddhism. That's more like the heart mind. And I've been playing with this experience of mind or awareness and how it intercepts with our experience, sensations, thoughts, emotions, desires and how we get jumbled up around it, or roiled up, right. And to learn how to reset.

And so, I've noticed that in some ways, I always have something to say, but I'm noticing that the less in some ways is the better. And I had [inaudible 36:51] to speak about tennis, but C, hopefully we'll get to play at some point in our lives. But I've noticed that coming back to this recently, I've noticed that if I'm really letting it go and really swinging freely, the court's very big.

But as soon as I start tensing up – and I don't know how this all works, but if I tense up and get tentative, the ball starts going long. It's amazing really, so that the fear, the experience of fear and control doesn't work, of course. But then and I'm interested... So, it's been how to relate to that. How to relate to how to play, how do I make mistakes, how do I forgive myself for making mistakes, how do I learn and more and more freely play? That's what I'm interesting in.

Rob: Yeah, me too. Not only with tennis, not only with golf, but in our life and our relationships. I can have an argument with my wife very easily. All I need to do is to get tense and be right, and stick to my guns and dig my heels in, and there comes an argument. It works every time. And some of us are slower learners than others, L. I don't know. I'm tempted to think that I should become a Buddhist and look at reincarnation because I don't think I'm going to get it right this time around.

But Alan Watts, I think made a really helpful comment here that when he talked about the journey between the labour ward and the crematorium, he said he

thought a journey was not the best metaphor because the journey seemed to imply a destination. And he expressed a preference for thinking of it not as a journey, but as a dance. So, if we're dancing, you can't make a mistake. You might tread on your partner's toes if you're dancing with someone else, or maybe if you're dancing by yourself, you'll fall over or bump into something, but it's not a reason to get off the dance floor.

I'm reminded of Steady Eddy. He had a problem with spasticity. He was a standup comic and he said that he had won a first prize in a dancing competition once while all he was trying to do was to get from one side of the dance floor to the other. So, he was dancing all of his life, Steady Eddy. He probably still is. I don't know.

So, I think that for me, the idea of a dance somehow speaks to C's backhand and your exploration, L.

H: I wanted to say hello to L.

L: Hey.

H: And I'm reminded when you talk about tennis, L, of an exercise you and I once did together where you were having me do a tennis racquet in a hypnosis exercise a while ago. But I think this whole topic of where are we going and this is a journey, and what you expect ahead resonates with me now since I'm making a career pivot. And I know I'm pivoting, but I'm not exactly sure where I'm going. It's kind of moving forward without knowing where the horizon exactly is.

Rob: Whoa. That is an adventure, H.

H: It is an adventure and I have my coworker here with me. Can you see?

Rob: With an adventure like that, I'm reminded of a comment that Humberto Maturana made, the biologist from Chile. He said to one of his coworkers that he was going to run a workshop in America and he was a native Spanish speaker. And his coworkers said, "Oh, that's going to be a challenge for you to do a presentation in English." And Humberto said, "Challenge? Nobody's going to try and kill me. There's no challenge happening. I'm just going to go to speak in English."

But he was a very trusting fellow, still is a trusting man. So, with the unknown, it doesn't have to be a challenge. We don't have to be, to use L's word, we don't have to be fearful. So, you don't know where the horizon is.

H: No.

Rob: But you have got a coworker.

The whole notion, it's an interesting, H, that if we think of the horizon, it's a bit like the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. If you think you're going to get to the horizon, you're going to end up back exactly where you started because the horizon moves as we do.

So, that's lovely and inspiring to hear that you're making that pivot.

H: I'm reminded of the Jon Kabat-Zinn book, *Wherever You Go, There You Are*. I'm trusting that if it seems like it's a good idea to make the change that however it happens, it will work out okay.

Rob: Yeah. Unless it doesn't. And if it doesn't, well, then you can find another way of having it work out okay and just do another pivot. There's plenty more pivots where that one came from.

H: And there have been pivots in the past, so there can be pivots in the future.

Rob: Yeah. And how have you worked out which pivot in the past has worked. I mean, we've all had pivots that haven't worked and we've had pivots that have worked. So, I wonder which ones worked for you and how you had them work. How did that happen? Not only you, but all of us.

H: Well, this one happened because I was attending a webinar with Cory Hammond and I let him hypnotise me in the webinar. And as L knows, because we worked together on other times that I'm highly suggestible, highly hypnotisable. So, I had some alligators biting me. And in the hypnotic trance, I saw the alligators and they were biting me and I saw the word 'work'.

Rob: Okay.

H: And when I came out of trance, it was the first time I had a sort of translucent visual hallucination, sort of a diaphanous image of alligators in my room. And so, I knew that something was going on with work that I had to pay attention to.

Rob: Right, okay. Yeah, if there are alligators around, that's a real incentive to pay attention, yeah.

I was pruning our climbing rose yesterday, it's Albertine and she's got vicious claws like your kind of therapist there. And when I'm pruning this rose, I'm very aware that she has the potential to bite me. So, I've got a back wall of alligators. I'm very careful. And I found that if I get bitten, it's helpful for me to apologise for being careless. I'm less likely to get bitten when that happens.

So, I love what you're saying because it's not just, "Aw, everything's going to be lovely and oh, it's all going to be easy." No, there are alligators.

Joseph Campbell made a beautiful invitation to anyone. He said, "Follow your bliss. If you find your bliss and you follow your bliss, it's going to be a good experience." Years later, he said, "Maybe I should have said follow your blisters," because if there is bliss, there is still, like you said, there's work to do. But if we are following our bliss and there's work, the work is not arduous; it's satisfying; it's pleasurable; it's enjoyable, satisfying, nourishing.

E: I experienced quite a pivotal change three years ago. Back then, I was extremely focused on my business, making the business successful. And I literally had just completed writing down a very detailed vision of how successful

my business and my life was going to be. And within a couple of hours, I was literally knocked out of that vision by being hit by a car as I was crossing the street.

And ever since then, I've really struggled to get back into that vision or back into that struggling with finding a passion – no, sorry, the purpose, the mission that everybody sort of talks about. If you want to be successful, you have to be really clear about your mission, or you have to have a very clear mission.

And some of the things that have been shared here this morning, actually give me now a total different view that maybe for me, it's not actually having that mission, but what I really enjoy about working with people is when I see their realisation and their honesty towards themselves and their emotions. And it just gives me such a buzz.

And it is a journey. It's not the outcome. It's actually the journey and I think now it's the clarity that, "Hey, it's because I really enjoy that." And also probably to some degree, I think I'm probably apt at doing, or helping people to get to that point where they can be so raw and so honest with their emotions. So, yeah, I think that's a really – yeah, great eyeopener about this no purpose.

Rob: There was a beautiful line in Richard Attenborough's film Gandhi where someone asked Gandhi, "What is your plan for India?" And in the film, Gandhi's reply was, "I'm going to continue to do what I'm doing at the moment and if God is willing, after I've done that, I'll move onto the next thing." He had no plan, but he had – what can you say? He had heart, he had ethics, he had context. He had like, to use your words, he was honest with himself and his emotions. He's very clear. That's lovely, E. Lovely.

And you know, when you get run over by a car, get hit by a car like that, you know, I'd like to think that there's nothing like a bit of death to make us appreciate being alive. And just to be alive, you know, if you get hit by a car, you could have been killed. So, just the fact that you are alive, that is something. That's something. And we just take it for granted, but I bet you don't take it for granted.

E: No.

Rob: No. Now, that is something. Yeah. It's not nothing. It's not minor. It's huge. So, that driver did you a huge favour by nearly killing you. It probably didn't feel like it at the time, but...

E: No.

Rob: Yeah, exactly. Yeah, thank you for that.

A, you're still muted. No, you're still muted.

A: What I'm appreciating in myself at the moment that I dream about where I want to go or what life's about, just it's a dreamy thing, but when I came to this session, I was thinking, "Well, I can give myself bad names, like you're a workaholic, you're driven," and I'm all of those things, but I am a dreamer. And I

dreamt a fair while ago that I saw myself painting most of the time, and gardening most of the time and letting go of a lot of the other things and I'm actually doing it. And it's always a surprise when I realise I'm doing my dream.

Rob: Yeah. A surprise. It can even be a shock.

A: Yes, right.

Rob: I remember talking to a psychiatrist, who said that when he was training as a doctor, he had a dream of living in a house surrounded by his family and working from home and doing good work. He had this dream. And that kept him going through his medical degree and then through his postgraduate training to become a psychiatrist.

And we were having this conversation in the middle of a workshop and he said, "You know, while this has happened, I'm living my dream," but he said, "I feel a kind of like unease and I'm drinking too much. And I don't know, there's something not right about it."

And we sat down on a park bench, we were walking at lunchtime. And I was feeling cheeky at this time and I said to him, "Some things you just have to put up with. You had this dream and it's come true, so maybe you just have to suffer it and just put up with it."

Now, he was shocked when I said that and he was paralysed. And he sat on the bench there and I got up and walked off and he was still there a few minutes later. But after that, after he realised that sometimes when our dreams work out, we just have to put up with them. He was able to get on with life and the conflict went by him just putting up with it instead of celebrating it. But his problem, to continue what E is saying, he'd had achieved his mission. That was a problem to him. [inaudible 56:49] so now what? He was in conflict about it until he wasn't.

A: I was always hopeless at when there was a craze on doing a vision statement, but did not have a clue when I did it. I could never do a vision statement.

Rob: That's my experience to being in a such muddle at the moment, A.

A: You didn't have a vision.

Rob: Well, I think that you and I can complain that we're enlightened, but we're beyond such things.

A: Or rebellious.

Rob: Yes. No, well, I'm not going to go there.

Okay, well, I noticed the time. Is there anything, any other comments that anyone wants to make before we stop today?

L: Just thanks, Rob, and thank you all.

Rob: Yeah.

F: Yes, thank you, everybody.

F: Thanks, Rob.

R: Yeah, thank you.

Rob: What a weird way of spending time.

E: Thank you.

L: Thank you, Rob.

Rob: Okay, thank you all.

F: Thank you.

R: Thank you. Thank you for making it happen.

M: All the best.

F: Bye.

Rob: Yeah. Bye.

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