



BEWILDERED

WITH MARTHA BECK
AND ROWAN MANGAN

Episode #2: The Productivity Addict

Please note: This is an unedited transcript, provided as a courtesy, and reflects the actual conversation as closely as possible. Please forgive any typographical or grammatical errors.

Rowan Mangan: Hello and welcome to Bewildered; the podcast for people trying to figure it out. I'm Rowan Mangan, and I'm sure as heck trying to figure it out. I'm here with Martha Beck who I think has a doctorate in figuring it out, thank goodness. Hi Marty.

Martha Beck: Hi, I love hearing you say Bewilderred and Marrty because ordinarily you would say it in Australian.

Rowan Mangan: I had an existential crisis at the very moment of saying the word, where it was one of those things of, "Do I lean in on the American way?"

Martha Beck: Bewildahed.

Rowan Mangan: [Exaggerated Australian Accent] Bewildehd.

Martha Beck: [Exaggerated Australian Accent] Bewildehd with Mahty.

Rowan Mangan: [Exaggerated Australian Accent] Bewildehd with Mahty.
[Exaggerated Australian Accent] Welcome.

Martha Beck: Hi.

Rowan Mangan: [Exaggerated Australian Accent] It's a beautiful day.

Martha Beck: Funny thing is they called me that in Boston, when I lived there.

Rowan Mangan: Bewildehd?

Martha Beck: Mahty – Maather

Rowan Mangan: The Boston R is the same as the Australian R.



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Martha Beck: Yeah, they called me "Mather" and in New York, they called me "Morthier".

Rowan Mangan: Martha.

Martha Beck: Martha and "Mather". It's just all around a no-win name in some ways.

Rowan Mangan: I have been in this country for closer to four years and three at this point, and I must admit, I'm starting to hear my accent, occasionally it hits the "R"s. That's the place where it's coming first.

Both: RRRRRR!

Rowan Mangan: Let's try and figure that out.

Martha Beck: Let's figure out how to say figure.

Rowan Mangan: So, what we talk about on this podcast when we're not discussing my accent, is about the fact that we live in a bewildering moment in history. It's a pretty crazy time and it's a time that bewilderment feels like a pretty sensible response to, in many ways. But what we want to talk about here, is that bewilderment is a good thing. As our culture marches off in all kinds of strange directions, your bewilderment could actually be the little wake up call from your true nature that's giving you a course correction, to stay on your own path, and that path might be wilder, which is hence our be-wild-erment, and may point you in different directions from what the culture is telling you, and we find that interesting.



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Martha Beck: Yes, and just remember that culture is just consensus. Its view of truth is consensus. I've been reading this fabulous book about a Tibetan Lama and it really gets into Tibetan culture and how they just absolutely believed that, for example, this guy was going to open Shangri-La and they would all go into this valley, where no one would ever age and people sold all their possessions and went with him into the Himalayas, which is just not where I would want to go without any provisions. Anyway, it just reminded me culture is consensus. Their view of truth is the same as my belief in what scientists tell me. That's just where my faith is, and that is useful for working in the world of other people.

But when you get bewildered by the culture, you have to be wilder than that. If there's no path laid out for you, that works for you, you have to stop coming to consensus and start coming to your senses. Being here now, opening your eyes and ears, and all your other perceptual apparatus and really seeing, also opening your intuition to whatever inspiration tells you about what to do next. So, that is the way we try to figure things out on Bewildered.

Rowan Mangan: I like it.

Martha Beck: I like it.

Rowan Mangan: I like what you're saying. I'm frantically trying to write it all down. I don't know why we are recording this.

Martha Beck: We are recording it, you know. You'll figure it out.

Rowan Mangan: I guess I'll try. I've got so much that I am trying to figure out this week Marty.

Martha Beck: Why, are you trying to figure out why deer are vertical kangaroos? Horizontal kangaroos?



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- Rowan Mangan: Horizontal kangaroos.
- Martha Beck: Did we talk about this last week?
- Rowan Mangan: It's all we talk about to be honest.
- Martha Beck: It's all we ever talk about. Ro's accent, and where are the damn kangaroos?
- Rowan Mangan: I seem to have a very deep homesickness, that is not on the surface, that just manifests and kangaroos and accents. No, the thing that I wanted to talk to you today, that I'm trying to figure out that maybe you can help me come to my senses about, is it's about productivity, you know? And I am, in this point in my life, where I'm doing a bit of a reset and recalibration around work and health and a lot of different things, and I have a bit of an all or nothing personality, it must be said, and so when I do begin something new, there's often a flurry of activity. So, you know this about me.
- Martha Beck: Oh yeah.
- Rowan Mangan: But that being said, there's a kind of interesting thing that I'm working on right now, which is trying to figure out how to be productive, but not to go into a kind of manic productivity fever. All the apps that are there, I think the culture is quite focused on productivity, so many podcasts, so many books and it's all about get more out of this day, out of this body, out of this lifetime... and quantity. And what I've noticed myself going into, and I'm not sure how to figure it out, is that I'm getting intensely obsessed with my to-do list, and it's like I've got a new video game that's called "To-do List", and the video game is giving me a lot of little dopamine hits, when I tick things off.



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Rowan Mangan: It sounds stupid in a way, but I get really, really into ticking things off this list, and I want to be able to still relax and have downtime. And I thought: I know what I'll do, I'll figure this out by putting "nurture time" on my to-do list...

Martha Beck: Nurture time and serenity now! [crosstalk 00:05:49].

Rowan Mangan: Bubble bath, me time, tick it off, woo, I get to tick it off, and it's getting ridiculous. I do like ticking off "nurture time" on my to-do lists, but something's wrong. I'm getting into a strange cycle and so I'm trying to figure out, Marty, how I can be productive and organize my time. I work from home and so I have to create my own structure and I want to do that, but I don't want to become in this manic fever pitch. Can you help me figure it out?

Martha Beck: I will try. I think everybody does this. I used to think only I did it, and I thought it was because I was born in the year of the tiger in the Asian Zodiac and tigers are known for taking very intense short sprints and then having to sleep for 20 hours. So, I would really get into the lists of things to do and then I would crash and burn, and I was just looking at that fabulous website, Hyperbole and a Half, Allie Brosh. Have you ever seen her "why I can never be an adult"?

Rowan Mangan: Oh my gosh, she's my hero.

Martha Beck: Yeah, it shows pictures of her getting a huge wave of inspiration. And she goes out and she does all the things and she cleans all the things and she goes shopping, and she goes to the post office, and the bank, and then...

Rowan Mangan: There is nothing in this world more adult, than going to the post office.



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Martha Beck:

That's so true. But then, she gets up the next day, it's like, "I go to the store again, I... clean all the things?" She just slowly wilts, and then she just ends up clinically depressed on the couch. She's just adorable. I think it's something we all do, and I think it's a product of the culture. I really do - speaking of the culture - because we have a culture that's obsessed with productivity and then it's measured mechanically. It's a very mechanically based culture.

So, I remember being on a train in Switzerland with this guy and he had just dropped out of a marathon and he said in his perfect English, because everything they do in Switzerland is perfect, "I don't know what happened, I followed, I had a training program and I followed it to the letter" and I was like, "Oh, what happened during the race?" And he was like, "I don't know, I just, I got to a point I couldn't run." And I said, "well, have you been feeling?" "Not good, not good, but I followed my training program to the letter," and I was like, "well, what have you were super tired? Did you rest?" And he just looked at me as if I switched to speaking Urdu or something. He was like, "what could you possibly mean by that?" So, he was completely out of his senses. He wasn't feeling anything on the inside of his body. He had this training program and he was following it meticulously, and if he were a robot, it would work. If you were a robot, this would be working for you.

Your problem is you've stopped being an animal and become a robot, because that's the way the culture likes to see us. But we are animules and you can't just run an animule at top speed all the time. So, let me ask you some questions about yourself.

Rowan Mangan:

Please do.

Martha Beck:

Okay, so remember the last time, is this happening today? List this, tick off, tick off.



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- Rowan Mangan: It is happening constantly. I'm sitting here going, "Soon I'll be able to tick off podcast."
- Martha Beck: All right, so feel how that expresses itself in the body. So, feel the sensation inside your body when you're thinking, ticking things off, ticking things off I'm going to tick off 20 things and I'm going to tick off podcast, and I'll go onto the next tick off.
- Rowan Mangan: The next tick off. The first feeling that I can locate is, I mean it feels like excitement to me.
- Martha Beck: Where is it in your body?
- Rowan Mangan: It's straight down between my chest and my stomach.
- Martha Beck: So right in your solar plexus yeah?
- Rowan Mangan: No, it runs between them.
- Martha Beck: Oh, so it's a line. Okay, okay, and what does it feel like? What temperature is it?
- Rowan Mangan: It's a little warmer than room temperature.
- Martha Beck: And is it tight or loose?
- Rowan Mangan: It's tight.
- Martha Beck: And what is its texture, is it brittle or stretchy or anything else? Crunchy, fragile, stony.
- Rowan Mangan: It's like a taut, strong muscle.
- Martha Beck: A taut, strong muscle. Does it feel good?
- Rowan Mangan: Yes! That's the problem. It feels really good.



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Martha Beck: Okay, well look elsewhere in your body. How's it affecting your jaw?

Rowan Mangan: Tight.

Martha Beck: How's it affecting your shoulders and between your shoulder blades?

Rowan Mangan: Tight.

Martha Beck: How's it affecting your arms and hands?

Rowan Mangan: All right, hang on. I don't know how it's affecting my arms and hands. It makes me feel like... I feel -- they feel eager to do things.

Martha Beck: Well, it's interesting because I'm not a particularly yogic person, but there's something to all this chakra business, I have to say, and what you're feeling is going from your gut to your power center.

You're feeling this surge of hot, warm, exciting energy, but where it's affecting your heart, between the shoulder blades and around your shoulders, and where it's affecting your head, your jaw, and maybe a band around the head is tension.

Rowan Mangan: Right.

Martha Beck: So, you're getting a mixed pleasure, which by the way, is one of the most reinforcing things you can do to a pigeon or a rat.

Rowan Mangan: Really? Or a me.

Martha Beck: Sometimes I just do that to the rats in our house. I just lie on the floor going, "come to me and I will feed you for coming closer, and then slap you for coming too close". It confuses them.



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Rowan Mangan: I'm just seeing a headline: "Famous Life Coach Martha Beck Reveals Habit of Randomly Reinforcing Rats."

Martha Beck: Are you kidding? That's what the entire profession is about. Sorry, clients and ex-clients, it's all wonderful. Seriously, it is. No, but when you get a mixed pleasure, you have to be able to parse it out.

You have to be able to see how it's affecting the different parts of your body, because what we tend to do is we get very fixated on the pleasure and we stop looking or sensing signals from the rest of the body, that this is not ideal, because anything ideal will put you into a parasympathetic nervous system state, which means you'll be in rest and relax, instead of fight or flight. So, the tight jaw, the tight shoulders, that's fight or flight, the belly stuff may actually be parasympathetic, like enthusiasm and joy. What would you say? Does this ring true?

Rowan Mangan: Yeah, it does, and it's interesting because, and I may be misinterpreting my senses, but I feel like maybe somehow what's going on is that I'm in this particular mode in which all my senses are positively reinforcing it. I guess my jaw is tight, but my jaw is often tight. My dentist...

Martha Beck: Feel your shoulders, feel your shoulders. No, the idea here is... see, no I can hear you arguing for your disability: "Don't take my opium!"

Rowan: Don't take my lists away!

Martha Beck: "Don't you take my opium. Yes, my head is exploding with pain, but oh how, I love my opium." I'll be able to take care of it actually.

Rowan Mangan: Hello.



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Martha Beck: I just don't know how to get any opium. All right, so here's the deal. What you want is an entire body mind connection with relaxation at all times. Even people who are pushing at a very high level, like in an Olympic foot race or gymnastics or a martial arts battle, the best performers are completely relaxed and moving really fast and having a great time doing it. This... T.S. Eliot called it "still and still moving."

So, what we want to do is get you able to bring your whole self to the table when you're productive.

Rowan Mangan: Is that state of constant relaxation, which sounds kind of nice, is that incompatible with the little dopamine hit, write it down...

Martha Beck: No, not at all. People who are performing "in the zone," as Csikszentmihalyi it, they're pushing very hard and they're almost doing more than they can but they're very, very relaxed and their dopamine maxes out at that point, so it is a "still and still moving" thing. The problem is: you're crashing, because you're ignoring things that are wrong. It's like your airplane engine is running great, but there are struts and bolts that are rattling and that's why you crash after a period of productivity. And you might even go into a slump or even a mild depression, because you've been maxing out your system. Am I wrong? Tell me where I'm wrong.

Rowan Mangan: It's so funny cause it's like, asking me while I'm high what it's like not to be high. It's really funny cause I'm like "I don't know what you're talking about." This is the perfect feeling. I don't get depressed; I don't get a slump.

Martha Beck: Let me remind you of a little something you have called chronic fatigue syndrome.

Rowan Mangan: I have never heard that term before in my life. Everything is great.



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Martha Beck: They don't really understand it. It might be that the mitochondria in the cells stop conveying oxygen to the muscles. Whatever it is, it's a very real thing, and when it hits, people actually lose the ability, sometimes, to move, and I have seen you do this, Rowan Mangan, not once, not twice but many times.

Rowan Mangan: And yet, from...

Martha Beck: J'accuse!

Rowan Mangan: All right well, you accused, with some credibility, but it's interesting because [crosstalk 00:16:14] No, all I'm saying is it's so fascinating to watch myself from here.

Martha Beck: Yeah.

Rowan Mangan: How little that means to me...

Martha Beck: Because you're high.

Rowan Mangan: Because I'm high.

Martha Beck: It's really interesting because we may be actually tracing the etiology of your chronic fatigue syndrome because to get to the point where you actually drop and can't move. This is what used to happen to people in marathons, before they found out that you could run on ketones instead of glucose. But, when you get to the end of your reserves, it's because you've been maxing out your supply.

Rowan Mangan: So, what should I do?

Martha Beck: Alright, this is what we get to do. Okay. So, the first thing, we're going to switch you back to your parasympathetic nervous system and rest assured, I do not plan to take your productivity away from you. Quite the opposite.



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Rowan Mangan: Thank you.

Martha Beck: All right.

Rowan Mangan: I love it.

Martha Beck: So, first thing, is push your back up tight against the chair cushion, would be even better if you were back to the wall, but we can't do that right now because that's just how we're set up. But...

Rowan Mangan: Can you just tell me what you're about to do?

Martha Beck: Yeah, I'm about to try to calm your body the way I would calm say an anxious, excited dog or horse.

Rowan Mangan: Cool.

Martha Beck: Yeah, because as long as you're in a state of high excitement, you're like a little yippy dog, who just won't stop running and running around the room and running into furniture and licking people's faces...

Rowan Mangan: Oh my god, I have been running into furniture today.

Martha Beck: And licking people's faces constantly.

Rowan Mangan: Well that's just a normal day.

Martha Beck: Bit me on the hand twice.

Rowan Mangan: You wouldn't take me for a walk.

Martha Beck: So, what we're going to do, is we're just going to calm down the anxious animal.

Rowan Mangan: Okay.



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Martha Beck: Okay, and you do that by pressure. Pressure against the body.

Rowan Mangan: Okay.

Martha Beck: They sell these weighted blankets, that can be really good, they're like 20 pounds and you put them on, and they press on your body, kind of the way Temple Grandin, the famous autistic author, did with this machine. She made it herself like a hugging machine to calm herself and it would just put pressure on her body. So, we want to move out of the mind, there's no mind fix for this. I mean, there's a partial mind fix, but we've got to go to the body. So, press your back against the chair.

Rowan Mangan: Okay.

Martha Beck: And it can actually help to put your arms around your own rib cage and hug yourself tightly.

Rowan Mangan: Okay, I'm doing that.

Martha Beck: But not too tightly so that you have to hunt your shoulders, just firmly embrace your rib cage and start to breathe regularly and slowly and deeply, especially slow exhales. And this relaxes your system, because there was never, in the history of wild animals, an animal who, while being pursued by a predator, did this. [Deep breath followed by long sigh] So when you do that, your entire nervous system switches. You can also create an open focus in your brain by looking simultaneously at everything in the room that is red. Everything in the room that is yellow, and everything in the room that is white.

So, you doing all the things?

Rowan Mangan: I am doing them all.

Martha Beck: Is your breathing slowing down?



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- Rowan Mangan: Yes, it is.
- Martha Beck: Can you drop your shoulders away from your ears and let them relax?
- Rowan Mangan: I can now.
- Martha Beck: Okay, can you bring the crown of your head slightly up and tuck your chin just slightly in, so that your head is resting on your shoulders, instead of jutting forward.
- Then allow the back of your neck to relax.
- Rowan Mangan: That feels good.
- Martha Beck: Yeah, it feels really good. It feels really good. So then you actually talk to the animal, because we are animals and you say, "okay, now we're going to do all the things, we're gonna do all the things, but you don't need to run around in a circle because first we're going to go in this room and we're going to tidy up this, and then we're going to go outside and we're going to rake some leaves, and then we're going to take those off and then we're going to sit down and do a work call and we're going to enjoy the person on the other end of the phone and we're just going to mosey through the day." Yeah?
- Rowan Mangan: Wow. That feels very nice.
- Martha Beck: Does it?



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Rowan Mangan: Yeah. It's so interesting because what I realize that even though I've been loving the feeling of productivity, what seems like it can be from this place you've brought me to, is that I can be acting more deliberately, which, I care about the quality of what I'm doing as well, not just ticking it off. I'm wanting to produce good stuff and that if I'm coming to it from a more deliberate and mindful place, I can tell the animal, the screeching one, that this is better work from this place.

Martha Beck: And the energy will sustain. That's the thing is, if you've had chronic fatigue or chronic pain or chronic illness, like you and I both have, and a lot of our listeners I think may have too, when you get a little bit of energy, the animal goes nuts trying to fit everything in, because it knows what it's like to be lame.

And when you've got all your energy, it's like "take advantage of it", and there's almost a panic response, but it's a prognostication of collapse. It's the fear of future collapse, so you've got to fit everything in right now. So, it's based on fear, and I've just been reading about how there are two ways to do things. One is fear-based, and it involves adrenaline and the other one is love-based, or desire based, and it involves oxytocin. Oxytocin is what we produce... Here's a classic difference. Think about love, like holding a baby and cuddling a baby, full of intense excitement.

Rowan Mangan: Doesn't feel right.

Martha Beck: Doesn't feel right. Your whole system says, "that's not how you handle a human animal." Now think of holding the baby, knowing that everything is in flow and everything is in rhythm and the two of you are just melded together. That's oxytocin.

Rowan Mangan: Hello baby.

Martha Beck: Hello.



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Rowan Mangan: Cutie.

Martha Beck: And it shows up when in lovemaking, it shows up in sleep, it shows up in enjoying a beautiful meal. Oxytocin is this wonder drug that does all the things that adrenaline does, only in a more rhythmic way, and in the meantime, the adrenaline is frying your body and your organs and oxytocin is making them well.

Rowan Mangan: And is the activity you just took me through, that exercise, is that turning off adrenaline and turning on oxytocin?

Martha Beck: Yeah.

Rowan Mangan: Really?

Martha Beck: Exactly.

Rowan Mangan: So, I will now have oxytocin in my bloodstream.

Martha Beck: Yeah, the moment you said "I don't feel right holding the baby in a state of high excitement," and I said, "imagine holding the baby in a state of flow, and in a state of communion with the baby," you immediately started producing oxytocin. It's incredible. And men, same thing. You don't have to be female, even though women produce this during lactation, but that's why men love sex so much. It's one of the highest oxytocin producing activities they can do, and it's that high, that mellow, lovely communal, ecstatic, union feeling. That's all oxytocin, and you can create it anytime.

Rowan Mangan: So, say you don't have the opportunity to immediately have sex whenever you're feeling a little stressed, what...

Martha Beck: What kind of a life are you living?



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Rowan Mangan: I know right, I'm just reevaluating my life decisions at this point. I'm just wondering for our listeners, holding a baby is nice, that's a good one. Is there any other little thought exercises you can do to switch yourself over, or body exercises you can do to switch yourself over?

Martha Beck: Yeah, the things I was telling you to do: press your back against something, hug yourself gently but firmly around the rib cage, and the slow exhale, and the deep slow, regular breathing — that is absolutely key. That's the magic bullet, and then widening the focus of your attention is what I did with the "see everything in the room that is red, everything that's blue, everything that's white or yellow" I said, not blue. So all of those things create an open focus in the brain and stimulate the toggle switch that takes you from the sympathetic nervous system, which is adrenaline fight or flight, over to the oxytocin, parasympathetic tend-and-befriend, hang out, and rest-relax-and-reproduce hormones.

And then from there, the work you do is actually much better. It's in tune with the energy of what wants to happen. It's in tune with nature, it's in tune, if you're making something for someone else's use, like you're writing a book, it's in tune with the reader. The first one gets you high, but it's not in tune with anything.

Rowan Mangan: Right, right.

Martha Beck: If you go to meetings, if you go to marketing meetings, sometimes in the past, I've gone to marketing meetings in publishing circles and it's like, "what are we going to do to sell this? You should write a book like Janine Roth. That book sold a million. What was it about? Do what she did, she wrote about God. Write about God. That'll do it."



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Martha Beck: If you write about God from that place, no one will believe you and that is not going to freaking work. And people all do it. "Let's go write a book about magic, like Harry Potter. Oh yeah. Magic. Like Harry Potter. We'll make a whole demi-world like she did." See, I'm getting too excited now because I'm talking about that energy. It's yucky.

Rowan Mangan: Yeah.

Martha Beck: And the thing is [inaudible 00:26:22], JK Rowling was in love with her Hogwarts. She was in love with that world. She was in love with those characters. It just makes you want to hug yourself, just thinking about how she felt, I think, and that's why we all loved it so much.

Rowan Mangan: That's true, yeah. That makes complete sense. That you would put your audience in the place where you are coming from yourself, the energy state that you are in yourself.

Martha Beck: What I always say, however you feel writing it is the way they feel reading it. I don't know if that's true, but it could be.

Rowan Mangan: It's definitely, I think true, that if you bring an energy into a room, whatever you're doing in that room, if there are other people there or animals, that you're going to get a response based on what you are projecting. The movement you're projecting, the energy you're projecting.

Martha Beck: Think about trying to get a horse... We used to be all about this when we lived on the ranch, trying to get a horse to go over a jump. A lot of people say... The horse is afraid to try to jump. They can hurt their feet on the other side and then their dead. Right? So, what a lot of horse trainers say is you have to be so scary to the horse, that disobeying you is scarier than going over the jump and that's how you get a horse to jump.



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Rowan Mangan: Ugh!

Martha Beck: Yeah, and then other people, like our wonderful friend Katja who's a fabulous dressage rider, and what she taught me was you get so in tune with the horse that it trusts you so much that when you love going over the jump, it loves going over the jump, and you just reinforce what it loves until the jump feels safe, and you go a little at a time and slow is fast.

Rowan Mangan: Right.

Martha Beck: If you do things in that space, training a dog, think about getting your dog to do what you want through fear and intimidation, versus love and reward. It's actually not even about getting the end result anyway, it's about how you feel doing the things. Ticking off the box, at the end of your life, do you want to just look at this huge list of things you ticked off and go, "well that was worth it?"

Rowan Mangan: Little bit. I mean, kind of. [Laughter]

Martha Beck: But what if you could look back on loving every minute of doing those things?

Rowan Mangan: Yeah, absolutely. Well the other thing that's coming to mind is, I was just thinking about my list and about how I've been trying to include health items each day and I was just thinking, if I was going to put this oxytocin-generating little moments to build those moments into my day, I would probably put them under health, because I'm sure that there are a lot of physical, like you're saying that your adrenaline is really bad for your body, but I'm sure the oxytocin is good for your health, right?



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- Martha Beck: Oh yeah, absolutely. It's incredible what it does to like cancer fighting cells and aging, like the fact that are these little dangly ends on the ends of our DNA. They shorten as we get older, and the shorter they get the more aged we are. While, if you're bathing yourselves in oxytocin, those things don't shorten. They stay young.
- Rowan Mangan: That's so cool.
- Martha Beck: So, you talk about putting it into your schedule as a thing to do, but I would say "no, do everything from that state." So, what's something on your list of things to do?
- Rowan Mangan: Let me just consult it.
- Martha Beck: Oh, she's going to be so excited.
- Rowan Mangan: I know, I am. Well, today we're doing the gathering room.
- Martha Beck: Okay, so I get excited thinking about doing the gathering room.
- Rowan Mangan: Which is an online broadcast that Marty does each week on Facebook.
- Martha Beck: Yes, on Sunday afternoons. So, we could get excited and go, "Oh the gathering room! We're going to do the Gathering Room!" Sometimes we bring that energy to it, especially because we're just sitting in the bedroom and there are a thousand or three or four hundred people, however many are on that line, I don't know.
- Rowan Mangan: They're invisible.



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- Martha Beck: A few million, twelve, I'm not sure. I really don't know. But if instead of going "Ahh! Gathering Room! Gathering Room!" if we stop, do the little self hug, press your back against something, exhale and then think how can we bring some people along into this peaceful flow of joy. Think of merriment and ebullience, but always from this state of flow.
- Rowan Mangan: Right -- And completely! -- but for me, what I'm going to need to do to incorporate that is have some sort of prompt. You said, "sit back and do the hug yourself and take the breath," and what I'm saying is I need to build that into my day. You say, "don't schedule it," but if you're running on a different track, something needs to come in, to remind you, and then I will try and do everything from that place. But first I to keep getting there.
[crosstalk 00:31:18]
- Martha Beck: Yeah, you can do a... I love meditating in the morning. It sets the whole day up. But what I was thinking was that 30 second check in at the beginning of every new activity.
- Rowan Mangan: Oh, that's good. Yeah, I love that.
- Martha Beck: Yeah, so think about whatever you're doing next, like taking a shower, give yourself a little...
- Rowan Mangan: You were going to say something different. Taking a shh, something else. Why not?
- Martha Beck: That's just pure relaxation. Although I used to do it in a state of high excitement, it was really disastrous. When you can not stop running around during that...
- Rowan Mangan: We used to do these little shouts of "hooray, you did it."



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- Martha Beck: That reminds me of this motocross magazine, where they said, "this new car combines the thrill of," I forget what it is, "high torque with the joy of a well-timed shift," only they left an F out of shift.
- Rowan Mangan: Well timed.
- Martha Beck: Well timed. You're just sitting in the car, just with a smile on your face!
- Rowan Mangan: I wonder if a well-timed shift is a good way to put your body into the parasympathetic.
- Martha Beck: That actually is true, or it could be a little dress that I make for myself.
- Rowan Mangan: Oh no.
- Martha Beck: All right. Anyway, see, this is what happens to me. I'm trying. I get relaxed, and then I get silly, and then everything's fun.
- Rowan Mangan: Well see that in itself is a great advertisement for this state of mind, because I like it when it's silly.
- Martha Beck: So back to taking a shower, which is what I really was going to talk about.
- Rowan Mangan: Sure, you were.
- Martha Beck: Even that, before you take a shower, you stop, you breathe, you exhale, you make sure you're in rest and relaxation, instead of fight or flight and then, it occurs to me that I could really enjoy the shower, the sensation of the water, that lather of the shampoo, as opposed to rushing to get through it, which is how I usually do.
- Rowan Mangan: Right, so how do you remember to even take that time?



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Martha Beck: I actually was thinking because you do make lists, most of us do and you do tick things off, and there are apps for this and everything because we have this factory-based model of society, and I think that every time you move to a new task and you go to your little list of reminders or you have an app that pings or something, you set it to, "okay now it's time to make the cookies, but I'm going to do it in a state of relaxation." So, every single time you switch tasks, you just check and go back.

Rowan Mangan: Well I think that there's, there's probably a lot of bewilderment out there that this, this sits very close to the heart of, so I think that that was great. Thank you. I would love to invite anyone who is trying to figure something out in their own life, have a little life puzzle, that is bewildering you. Please do send them in. They'll be information on the show notes about where you can send your questions, for Martha, and we will try to help you come to your senses next time.

Martha Beck: So today, just give yourself a little hug. Press your back against the cushion. Take a deep breath, let it out. Come home. Come home, little doggie and calm down, and everything will get done in a happy, happy way.