



BEWILDERED

WITH MARTHA BECK
AND ROWAN MANGAN

Episode #8: Getting Back on the Horse

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.

- Martha Beck: [Intro Music] Welcome to Bewildered. I'm Martha Beck, here with Rowan Mangan. At this crazy moment in history a lot of people are feelings bewildered, but that actually may be a sign we're on track. Human culture teaches us to come to consensus, but nature — our own true nature — helps us come to our senses. Rowan and I believe that the best way to figure it all out is by going through bewilderment into be-wild-erment. That's why we're here. [Music fades]
- Martha Beck: Hi, I'm Martha Beck.
- Rowan Mangan: And I'm Rowan Mangan. This has Bewildered, the podcast for people trying to figure it out. I've been trying to figure it out for months. Since we last made this podcast and Marty got up this morning and had half a cup of coffee and figured it out spontaneously.
- Martha Beck: Yeah, I'm pretty sure it was the caffeine. I really, really like caffeine. Do you like caffeine? It figured itself out and completely all just because of the caffeine. I loved the caffeine. I love the caffeine.
- Rowan Mangan: Caffeine is very special. The amazing thing is that I'm sitting here on my third coffee and I can't muster up anything like that energy. I guess that's what you get for starting life with no caffeine.
- Martha Beck: Yeah, growing up no caffeine. It was a sin. That's the reason I love caffeine so much, it's a sin.
- Rowan Mangan: So many good sins to explore in this life.
- Martha Beck: I went from coffee, which is a relatively mild sin to lesbianism, which is like, take you out back and hit you with a shovel, sin.
- Rowan Mangan: Oh, so many sins. Is there anything you're still trying to figure out, Marty?
- Martha Beck: Yeah. Redeeming myself with the Penguin Publishing marketing staff, after the meeting you had them yesterday.



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Rowan Mangan: Yeah. That was really something.

Martha Beck: Can I just paint the folks a word picture?

Rowan Mangan: Sure.

Martha Beck: Okay. Rowe is trying to do this meeting. If we don't tell them what happened between now and then I can't really explain what I'm trying to figure out. There was a thing, [crosstalk 00:01:33].

Rowan Mangan: Yes. We skipped something.

Martha Beck: We skipped something.

Rowan Mangan: Press hold in your mind on the story about the meeting. We will just like clear up a little something first, which is that it's been a really long time since we last did one of these podcasts.

Martha Beck: Yes. What are you trying to figure out Rowan Mangan.

Rowan Mangan: I am trying to figure out how to have a baby and a job. That is because unlike last time you heard us here in Bewildered, we've had the bewildering experience of we had a baby.

Martha Beck: It wasn't all that bewildering.

Rowan Mangan: Hey, speak for yourself.

Martha Beck: Well, there were a lot of implements involved.

Rowan Mangan: Oh my gosh.

Martha Beck: Yeah. I had other babies and it was just like, what happened? Simple tools you find around the house.

Rowan Mangan: We did not do it that way.

Martha Beck: No. The tools were not simple.

Rowan Mangan: The tools went not around the house.

Martha Beck: And they were not around the house. If they were we would've been raided by the Food and Drug Administration. We have more hypodermic needles in this house. It was a bewildering process, but Rowe figured it out. And actually came the baby.



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Rowan Mangan: A baby came out. Yes. After quite a long time of going through all the joys of IVF and shit like that. Still a human grew inside my body. Can't complain. Now, it came out and is just the light of our lives.

Martha Beck: Yes. We'll be talking more about that later. But first let that be point one in your understanding of what I'm trying to figure out.

Rowan Mangan: There wasn't a baby, now there's a baby. I think everyone's with us.

Martha Beck: The baby who, at the time of the meeting, was five months old. Yeah?

Rowan Mangan: Correct.

Martha Beck: Lying on the floor, playing with her toys and all that. Rowe was trying to be a good working mother, by having a Zoom meeting with the marketing staff for a book I wrote that's coming out in a few weeks. By the time you listen to this, it might already be out. But it was very formal and official.

Rowan Mangan: Wonderful book called The Way of Integrity.

Martha Beck: Yeah. The book is called The Way of Integrity. The marketing staff is really good at Penguin, Viking, whatever publisher I have. I'm not really great on details. That's the first word picture, baby. Second one, Rowe, Zoom meeting. Very serious business like.

Rowan Mangan: You know the scene, it's the Brady Bunch opening credits. There we all are, very official.

Martha Beck: Everybody's like working from home during the pandemic. Now, I had been recording the audio book and then I'd been up really late the night before, doing an interview that was in a different time zone. I had sprayed my hair quite a lot.

Rowan Mangan: The night before.

Martha Beck: The night before. I got up. When I sleep on a lot of hairspray, imagine a cockatoo that has been run through a carwash. I have this sort of crest, but it's not attractive in any way.

Rowan Mangan: It's artistic.

Martha Beck: That's what it is. It's artistic.



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- Rowan Mangan: It's interesting.
- Martha Beck: Then I have my bathrobe. I go through bathrobes, like other people go through, I don't know, Graham crackers or something. Rowe got me this bathroom that makes me look like a Russian noble. It's a wearable blanket, essentially. Very furry.
- Rowan Mangan: Very soft.
- Martha Beck: Yeah. The first time we had company and I wore this particular bathroom into the room, everyone laughed without stopping for about 10 minutes. But I love it, because it's warm. Rowe, serious meeting. Baby on the floor. Me, crest wearable blanket.
- Rowan Mangan: At the beginning of the meeting, we're all, "Hi." "Hi." "How are you doing?" "Oh, good. Thanks." "Are we all here? Is Martha going to be joining us today?" I say, "No, she won't actually be able to join us today." That's fine. It wasn't necessary that you be there.
- Martha Beck: Everybody was fine with that. I was thinking you should have said. Because I was in the room to take care of the baby if she fussed.
- Rowan Mangan: Yes.
- Martha Beck: But I was so tired from the audio book and all, and the interview. I was just going to lie there, then if the baby fussed I'd get up. And I was thinking, "She should have told them, I'm recording the audio book because that sounds much more official." But she didn't because she's a very honest person.
- Rowan Mangan: A reminder that Martha's new book is called, The Way of Integrity.
- Martha Beck: The Way of Integrity. Well, I didn't want to lie. I wanted you to lie.
- Rowan Mangan: Got it.
- Martha Beck: Okay. We're getting into the meeting, it's a very serious agenda. Everybody's very buttoned down. The baby starts going, 'Heh Heh' which is the way she fusses. She does a fake cough.
- Rowan Mangan: She's polite.



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- Martha Beck: Like, "Hello, diaper." She's lying there doing that. I thought, "Oh, well, this could get bad." I'm going to be the great ally that I always wanted when I was having tiny babies of my own, that came out of my own body. I thought, "I'm going to stay out of the shot." I got down on the floor, well out of sight and I crept, slithered is really the word. I slithered belly to the floor, face to the floor.
- Rowan Mangan: Picture someone trying to do a commando crawl, but in the softest bath robe of all time.
- Martha Beck: With a crest.
- Rowan Mangan: With a crest.
- Martha Beck: I mush my way, I slither my way up to the baby and I start playing with the baby. Poke you in the belly button, but softly, silently.
- Rowan Mangan: We're over here talking about, yes, numbers, launch event. Yes, affiliate links.
- Martha Beck: Los Angeles, Houston, whatever. Then the baby starts to have a lot... We are having a lot of fun together. I think I'm going to take her to a different part of the room. I put her in a football hold under one arm and slither to another place. I look at my phone because I'm thinking, and Rowe is dangling her cell phone frantically, wiggling it at me.
- Rowan Mangan: Imagine someone dangling something frantically, if you will. While keeping a very straight face.
- Martha Beck: But she's staring at the screen, totally businesslike. I think, "I'm about to get so many love hearts for being a supportive person to a working mother." I look at her and her face is just completely stern. In fact, it's a little angry. I look at the message on my phone and it says -
- Rowan Mangan: "You are on screen."
- Martha Beck: The entire time.
- Rowan Mangan: So I've been sitting there, there were only four people in the meeting, so imagine there was plenty of room in my little Brady Bunch screen for them to see the background. I had really carefully chosen this background because I didn't want... You know how it goes. You don't want people to see how you live. I was trying to like strategically avoid pockets of mess that could have appeared behind me.



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- Rowan Mangan: The floor and just where the baby's foot was, the baby's foot sort of appeared. I don't mind that, because I don't mind my colleagues knowing that there's a baby dah, dah, dah. That was fine. But yeah, there was like ample background. As we discussed websites and affiliate links and anchors and whatnot yeah, we slowly enter into my background, slithered the fabulous, genius, best selling author herself, Dr. Martha Beck, Harvard University, in a robe with her crest, slithering to the baby, whispering, "Poke you in the belly button."
- Martha Beck: It wasn't right. It picked up every word by the way.
- Rowan Mangan: Can I just say something?
- Martha Beck: Okay.
- Rowan Mangan: Also, you got back to the bed, you saw the text and even after understanding what had happened, you did, did you not, commence a little game of pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake?
- Martha Beck: What else is one to do? Pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake, that's in the background of everything. Let's face it, in all in the background of all our lives, the soundtrack to all our lives, is someone going, "Pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake, baker's man."
- Rowan Mangan: Yes.
- Martha Beck: And yet Rowe remained angry.
- Rowan Mangan: It failed to cheer me up for some reason.
- Martha Beck: And said, "Please, could you go in the other room?" Via text.
- Rowan Mangan: Sorry, I just have to say, at the end of the meeting, there were two people from the publisher and then there was me, then there was someone else from our team. And after the publishers got off and it was just me and my colleague, I just said to her, "Did you happen to notice anything in the background of my screen?" She said, "Oh, you mean Marty, slithering across the floor in a soft robe to play with your baby?" I was like, "Yeah, that happened."
- Martha Beck: I got to get back on the horse somehow. It's all about getting back on the horse.
- Rowan Mangan: Yes. That's the topic.



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- Martha Beck: That's the topic of this podcast, should we say? Getting back on whatever horse you've fallen off of.
- Rowan Mangan: In our case, because it has been such a long time since the last time, this podcast itself, this is the horse upon which we are trying to get back.
- Martha Beck: It's weird. You fall off a horse and that's the thing, falling off a horse is scary. They say, if you don't get back on, you never ride a horse again, you have to get right back on.
- Rowan Mangan: But falling off a horse is at least quick and effortless.
- Martha Beck: Relatively.
- Rowan Mangan: Getting back on the horse-
- Martha Beck: Feels like-
- Rowan Mangan: It's taken us a while. We've had a few false starts on the podcast horse.
- Martha Beck: Indeed we have. We're going to talk about it here. We'll talk about various different aspects. Yeah. How to get on the horse.
- Rowan Mangan: We want to talk about, so you've got something you want to get back on the horse about. We know what we're talking about, right? You've been doing something and you've stopped doing it, and then you want to start doing it again. What we want to explore for ourselves as much as you, is do you want to get back on the horse? Are you sure you want to get back on the horse? When is the right time to get back on the horse? Should you get back on the horse? Which horse?
- Martha Beck: Which horse? Very, very good question.
- Rowan Mangan: Thank you.
- Martha Beck: This is about us getting back on the podcasting horse and dragging you guys back onto whatever horse you've fallen off of, right along with us.
- Rowan Mangan: I hope that your fall has been a soft landing. Just pause a minute before you get back on, that's all we're saying.



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- Martha Beck: Can I just tell you a brief thing about our friend Katya, who, who is a horse trainer and she fell off a horse and I believe she was dragged, like her foot caught in the stirrup.
- Rowan Mangan: This isn't a metaphor, I hasten to add.
- Martha Beck: No. This is real.
- Rowan Mangan: Don't try and decode this as a metaphor with the foot in the stirrup is like the... No.
- Martha Beck: That'll come later actually. But she lost consciousness. Some people woke her up and said, "Who's president of the United States." She said, "I know it isn't Mozart."
- Rowan Mangan: Because she's classy.
- Martha Beck: She is. But she got back on that horse. That's why she's still a brilliant horse rider to this very day. We hope that after this podcast, you can figure out how to get back on any horse you like.
- Rowan Mangan: As you probably know, this podcast is about how culture teaches us to come to consensus. But on this podcast, we're all about coming to our senses.
- Martha Beck: Most of us grow up deeply socialized. We cooperate with our cultures, whatever they tell us to do. We kind of do it blindly from babyhood on. But even as adults, we're very, very responsive to cultural pressure. And cultures always try to push people to a kind of consensus about what's okay. That way the culture functions smoothly. But coming to our senses is like returning to nature as opposed to culture. Our whole premise is that your nature is what's best for you and the culture doesn't know what's best for you. We always talk about what's the cultural pressure around the thing we're trying to figure out.
- Rowan Mangan: Right. Because if it's all about consensus, it implies that everyone needs the same thing. We don't think that's true. We don't feel that that's true.
- Martha Beck: I don't feel that's true.
- Rowan Mangan: Well, I don't. I don't want to speak for you.
- Martha Beck: Some people do though, but we don't like them.



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- Rowan Mangan: We hate those people.
- Martha Beck: We hate those people. Okay. All right. Where is the cultural pressure around the issue of getting back on the horse?
- Rowan Mangan: I think that there is a tendency to think in a way of, "You must because you did. It has to be because it was before." When we're talking about getting back on the horse, it's like, "Are we sure that it's the right thing?" Because there's a consensus around it must be because it was.
- Martha Beck: I kind of call it the tyranny of the way it's done. It's so nonsensical. We have a summer break for children so they can help with the harvest.
- Rowan Mangan: What?
- Martha Beck: We go to offices to do information work because that's how a factory works. Wait, we don't need that either. Yet it's normal because it's the way it's done. It's familiar.
- Rowan Mangan: One of the ways that I'm really feeling that pressure at the moment, is that there's this whole thing after a woman has been pregnant, a person has been pregnant, which says bounce back, body-wise. You've had this massive event happened to your body and make sure that you're super skinny and super active and make it as though there was no pregnancy and there was no baby. I don't enjoy that.
- Rowan Mangan: I've really been conscious of feeling the pressure and very grateful that I have the luxury to be able to question that as well and say no. I think of this lovely song that I used to listen to, very obscure song from a folk singer back in Australia, where she talks about, "My softness, abundance, my strengths, my reserves." That came into my head the other day, when I was thinking about this postpartum, bounce back kind of cultural pressure. It's like, "No. My softness, my reserves. I'm keeping it. I'm not coming to that consensus."
- Martha Beck: No. I remember when I had my first baby way back in the days of early feminism, it was 1831, I believe.
- Rowan Mangan: You were suffragette.
- Martha Beck: Yes. I was a suffragette in my bloomers. I was at Harvard. It was like, "Okay, I have to go out and be like that woman who throws the calf in a field and just keeps harvesting. Tough feminist." I gave the baby to my then husband and she was about three



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weeks old and I tried to just go walk to an office and do something. I got as far as about a block away. Then I remember just leaning into a doorframe and sobbing. And my whole body was just like, "I must go back to my baby." I kind of realized from that point on, that the consensus was cruel, actually.

Rowan Mangan: I think one of the main things that we notice with this is, whenever it's your brain saying one thing and your body is saying another, that's a sign that there might be more investigation to be done. Our bodies aren't machines, it's not a factory. We've got to look into it.

Martha Beck: We live in this very mechanistic society where everybody is supposed to be machine-like. Totally predictable, always the same. We're not. We're not robots, we're animals. And animals are scared of the unfamiliar. That's one of the things that evolved into almost every creature, is if something's unfamiliar, shy away from it. Or if you haven't been there for a while, check it out carefully before you go back. There could be a predator there now.

Rowan Mangan: What's the thing about approach avoidance, Marty?

Martha Beck: They do these experiments with rats, where they can predict mathematically, exactly where a rat will stop. The rat is hungry, you put a pallet of food by a button and to get them the pallet, it has to press the button. But it will also get a small electric shock. I know. This is why I went into sociology instead of psychology. I couldn't bear to torture rats. No offense, psychologists out there, or rats for that matter. Trigger warning for our rat listeners. All right.

Martha Beck: If the rat is really hungry, it will go very close to the button, but it can't quite get itself to press it, because the shock. If it's not as hungry, it will stop halfway. Then it'll start going back and forth and back and forth. This is very interesting. It starts grooming itself, frantically.

Rowan Mangan: I know where this is going.

Martha Beck: Every time I try to get back on the horse with anything like writing or even painting, which I do for fun. I go right up to it, then I think, "What if I can't anymore? Maybe I won't be able to do this. I don't remember how to speak."

Rowan Mangan: Then all of a sudden that urge to floss your teeth becomes overwhelming.



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- Martha Beck: I floss and floss and floss. It might be nice to calm down my crest. But that's only when I have a deadline. That's a writing deadline when I start attacking the crest. What happens when you do the approach avoidance dance?
- Rowan Mangan: One of the things that I think I do, you've reminded me of this now, is that when we're starting a new project professionally, one of my happy places that I go to, is I start doing home make-y things. I take refuge in the domestic.
- Martha Beck: She becomes Hestia, goddess of the hearth. I will make bread from scratch. But with grass seed, from the yard.
- Rowan Mangan: I'll take your bird seed away from your birds and turn it into a tasty delight for humans.
- Martha Beck: Things get very tiny and we eat so well, when you have something to do professionally. Eventually, the horse is standing there. You have to get back on it. The productivity culture says-
- Rowan Mangan: The culture of productivity always says, "Recreate the past, no matter what the cost." I think we all feel that pressure.
- Martha Beck: Yeah. No matter what the cost. It really can get to the point where people are destroying their health. We've been joking, but in all seriousness, I've coached so many people who were spent from trying to continue to do things the way they'd always done them in the past. It could be like around things like you were mentioning, physical body stuff. I remember talking to this guy once and he's like, he had to drop out of a marathon.
- Martha Beck: He said, "I don't understand. I did the training exactly like they told me in the books." He's like, "I ran 20 miles in the morning. I run an extra 10 at night." He showed me a schedule. I'm like, "Dude, you're exhausted. You look exhausted." He's like, "What are you talking about? I have a schedule." I was like, "Lie down, honey. Just lie down."
- Rowan Mangan: It's so easy, even with those personal routines, those sort of classic things. "Every day, I'm going to do my 10,000 steps." Forget about marathons. I just need to walk around the block. We can just get very rigid. There's a thing where it's easier to, you commit to something once, and then you don't have to think every day. There's that sort of thing.



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- Martha Beck: But it's funny when something changes up, like my routine used to be meditate for like two hours in the morning. When the energy for that moved to something else, I really thought, "No, no, no. That was something good. I need to keep doing it exactly the way I did it before."
- Rowan Mangan: We even tried that with the podcast. There are episodes that will never see the light of day that we diligently recorded. We were trying to get back on the same horse in the same way. That wasn't our horse anymore.
- Martha Beck: Another place this really hits home is relationships.
- Rowan Mangan: Oh yeah.
- Martha Beck: There's the whole, the courtly love thing that comes from the 14th century in Europe, which is what our model of love is based on, is this intense sexualized, yearning that never gets fulfilled. Because in the 14th century, it was you lusting after someone else's spouse. We get that. That's in all the rom-coms, and it ends at the moment when they're in that heightened, heightened passion. Then occasionally, we'll say, "And 90 years later, they're just as hot for each other's bods. They got no teeth, but they're humping like bunnies."
- Rowan Mangan: That might be an advantage in some cases.
- Martha Beck: I'm not even going to countenance that. Yes, relationships don't always stay the same whether or not you lose your teeth. But flames can cool, even if you're just gumming everything. So to speak.
- Rowan Mangan: Well, it's almost like what the culture is saying is, it will look like this or it will be nothing. The tragedy of that, if you think about it in terms of relationship is, if you're not jumping each other's bones constantly in your 90s, then it's not a real relationship. Instead of looking at all the ways that these sorts of things can flourish. Or if you're not doing your 10,000 steps, what if you start swimming? There are other ways that we meet our needs, if our brains just stop telling us, "This is what it must look like."
- Martha Beck: A prime relationship is the one you have now with your baby. A lot of mothers get really clingy when their babies start to mature, hit those pubescent years, start branching out on their own.
- Rowan Mangan: The kid's a teenager and you still just blowing raspberries on their tummy, day and night.



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Martha Beck: Exactly. Slithering across the floor at night. "Hello, it's me and my crest. Just like always."

Rowan Mangan: "Mom, my husband's here. You're embarrassing me."

Martha Beck: Then there's work. People go home from a job for, I don't know, a global pandemic for a couple of years or whatever amount of time it is. Then they think, "Oh, we have to go back to it the same way." You see the pattern here. The culture is like, "Do it like it was. It must be because it always has been."

Rowan Mangan: How do we break the cultural mold, Marty? How do we start to evolve past the, "It must be because it was?"

Martha Beck: How do we go from culture to nature?

Rowan Mangan: How do we go from consensus to come to our senses?

Martha Beck: Exactly. I was just going to say that.

Rowan Mangan: Oh my God, we're so in sync.

Martha Beck: I know.

Rowan Mangan: Marty, as you know, in our household, we talk about a thing a lot called, Le pause.

Martha Beck: Le pause.

Rowan Mangan: Which comes from a book called Bringing Up Bebe, by a wonderful American woman who lived in Paris when she was having her kids. She just writes about things that American mothers might learn from French mothers and vice versa.

Martha Beck: What?

Rowan Mangan: Yeah.

Martha Beck: Learn? But we're Americans.

Rowan Mangan: There's this thing called Le pause.

Martha Beck: Le pause. I just like saying it. And bebe.



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- Rowan Mangan: Bebe. Moira Rose. Le pause is something that particularly trigger happy parents trying to respond to their children, need to learn. Which is say your kid starts making a bit of noise in bed.
- Martha Beck: Heh, Heh, Heh.
- Rowan Mangan: Like that, little polite, fake coughs.
- Martha Beck: "Excuse me, mother."
- Rowan Mangan: "Excuse me." What we can have a tendency to do is, "Oh no, my baby's in distress." And you run over and you, "Oh baby, what's wrong? What's wrong?" The lesson to learn, which we have needed to learn many times in our house is, "Hey, maybe baby is just rolling over or hanging out or making a bit of noise in her sleep. Just pause and see. Le pause."
- Martha Beck: Wait. You stop and wait.
- Rowan Mangan: You stop and wait. Hey, you don't have to commit to anything. Just check it out. See if what you think is happening is actually happening. See how it feels. When it comes to getting back on the horse, the way that we can use le pause, is let's stop before we jump back on it and start doing things the way they were before. Because maybe falling off the horse is a great opportunity to just check in with your senses.
- Martha Beck: Is that even the right horse?
- Rowan Mangan: Is it even the right horse anymore?
- Martha Beck: Don't just mindlessly climbed back on that particular horse, there could be other horses.
- Rowan Mangan: It might be a horrible horse.
- Martha Beck: It might be an angry, dreadful horse.
- Rowan Mangan: Could be just an ugly horse. You just don't want to be seen with anymore.
- Martha Beck: There are no ugly horses. There are only ugly riders. Horses are all perfect, they all go to heaven. And they'll kill you on site. I know this. Anyway, it's a different thing. As a coach, my whole life has been about people saying, "I've fallen off the horse of this or that." Usually professional, sometimes health, sometimes relationship. And they think they have to go back to the way it was.



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- Martha Beck: Everybody's telling them, "You need to go back to the way it was." But every time they try, they self-sabotage. That's the way they see it. Because what happens is, they get sick or they get distracted or they get in accidents. They literally, stop themselves and they think they're sabotaging themselves. What I always tell them is, "Maybe it was the wrong horse all along. What you're doing to get out of it is not self-sabotage but self rescue."
- Rowan Mangan: Oh my God, that's so good. Maybe that's a zebra. That's a zebra. It's not a horse at all.
- Martha Beck: Zebra will bit you and never let go. That's why they never domesticated them. You know?
- Rowan Mangan: Is that right?
- Martha Beck: Yeah. They are biters. They bite like a Tyrannosaurus Rex.
- Rowan Mangan: And there's your metaphor.
- Martha Beck: They just don't make a weird sound.
- Rowan Mangan: Try and get back on that horse. It'll bite you.
- Martha Beck: Yeah. And if it's going [inaudible 00:28:31], it's probably a zebra and will bite the living crap out of you. That's the sound they make.
- Rowan Mangan: Is it.
- Martha Beck: [inaudible 00:28:41]. There is zebras coming to the door right now, in response to my call.
- Rowan Mangan: You just gave them a mating call.
- Martha Beck: I know.
- Rowan Mangan: You thought you were saying, [inaudible 00:28:51] but actually you were saying [inaudible 00:28:53].
- Martha Beck: That's when the wrong horse gets back on you. Sorry, Catherine The Great reference. Boom. Google it.



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- Rowan Mangan: But there is definitely a feeling that if we can practice le pause long enough, there's a feeling about getting back on the wrong horse.
- Martha Beck: It's so clear. I'll go talk to groups about this, and they're like, "That's really woo woo and mysterious." I'm like, "No, it isn't. It feels horrible to try to do something that's wrong for you."
- Rowan Mangan: How do we know if I'm doing something that's wrong for me, or I'm having trouble getting back on the horse that's the right horse? What's the difference?
- Martha Beck: It's all about coming to your senses, as we say. Your brain will be screaming the cultural consensus, but your body is going to rejoice as you go towards something that's right for you. It's going to resist as you go towards something that's wrong.
- Rowan Mangan: Okay.
- Martha Beck: I've seen it in a million times. In my own case, I ended up majoring in Chinese in college. See, I didn't say Harvard. Oops, I said it. Drink. No, trigger warning, drink water. I majored in Chinese because I had a crush on a dude. Which is ironic-
- Rowan Mangan: A dude.
- Martha Beck: ... since I don't have crushes on dudes anymore.
- Rowan Mangan: I'm glad to hear it. Le pause.
- Martha Beck: Le pause, and 20 years later, oops. I majored in Chinese, and it was hard. I went to a Chinese speaking university in Singapore, where I was known as Mrs. Mandarin, because they filled out the form incorrectly. So I was Mrs. Mandarin, it was like a superhero, who spoke incredibly bad Chinese. Then I tried to go to-
- Rowan Mangan: There goes Mrs. Mandarin with her terrible Chinese.
- Martha Beck: Then I tried to go to graduate school in Chinese studies, because I was already doing it. But I was terrible at Chinese. Really, really not good. Never did get a hang of it.
- Rowan Mangan: It's funny because you speak Chinese spontaneously around the house all the time, now.
- Martha Beck: To you. If there's a Chinese person, it would be like me slithering across the floor in my cockatoo crest.



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Rowan Mangan: That's how I was picturing you as Mrs. Mandarin on the campus in Singapore. Just, "Ooh, there goes Mrs. Mandarins, slithering across the floor in her robe."

Martha Beck: Like a slug. I don't even know the Chinese word for slug. I should.

Rowan Mangan: Oh, my God.

Martha Beck: Anyway, I tried to go to graduate school in Chinese and it was like trying to take out my own appendix with like a blunt knife. It was like, "I really want to be in this program." "No way, don't." My whole body is feeling all crunched and nasty.

Rowan Mangan: So your brain thought that you should do, why?

Martha Beck: Because I had. I must because I had. That's what one does. Then I also applied in sociology, because that's sort of like, you could study Chinese things, but in a sociological way. Rather than in a Chinese speaking way, per se.

Rowan Mangan: Le pause.

Martha Beck: And then when I did that, it was like, [inaudible 00:31:58]. I got in to the PhD master's program in sociology. When I started reading the textbooks, and by the way, I had never had a sociology class when I started my doctorate in sociology.

Rowan Mangan: You crack me up.

Martha Beck: Well, I'm a person.

Rowan Mangan: There's a really horrible horse for me, that's called studying in Chinese. I'm going to find a lovely little Shetland pony called, doing a PhD in something I've never studied before. It's like, you love finding the hardest thing.

Martha Beck: That's why I majored in Chinese, actually. But literally I got the little guide book to the Harvard courses and it said it was very hard. Anyway, I started reading stuff in sociology and little did I know, it would be the right horse for me. I was so fascinated by it, that even though I was a working mom had a seven month old baby when I started, because cultural feminist, all that, le pause, don't do it. I would stay up at night when I could not afford to be more sleep deprived, because the material was so fascinating to me. I did not want to put it down. And every bit of it was in English.

Rowan Mangan: Oh, my gosh.



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- Martha Beck: Except for the parts that were in German.
- Rowan Mangan: Okay, le pause for a second. I just want you to break it down, how it felt getting on the wrong horse, versus how it felt getting on the right horse.
- Martha Beck: I do two applications for graduate school. I knew I wanted to stay at Harvard because my then husband was still in the graduate school himself. And we didn't have a car. Basically just kept going to Harvard over and over because we couldn't afford a car.
- Rowan Mangan: Drink, drink, drink.
- Martha Beck: Drink, drink, drink.
- Rowan Mangan: Water.
- Martha Beck: I applied for the topic I knew, Chinese. It was like mashing my face against a huge Emery board and squishing it back and forth. It was a horrible feeling. Then I applied in sociology, something I'd never basically thought about. It was like, "Yeah, [inaudible 00:33:55]." I couldn't get enough of it, I was full of energy. Your body gets full of energy, your mood goes up. Everything. This is why I was saying it's so freaking obvious, once you start paying attention. Now, when does that happen to you?
- Rowan Mangan: As you're talking, I think that when I first tried to rewrite my novel, I had a bit of an experience like this. I'd written a shitty, shitty first draft of my novel-
- Martha Beck: Such a lie. It was great.
- Rowan Mangan: ... many years ago. It was time to rewrite it, la, la, la. I knew it was the second draft time. I got into that manuscript and I started and I just hated it. I hated it. I think there's a feeling of, I think what you're saying about energy, just all the energy got sucked out of me immediately. I was so not interested. How do you get back on a horse that bores the living shit out of you? It's like the most boring horse in the world?
- Martha Beck: Can I intersperse here with the story of not getting on the horse, literally?
- Rowan Mangan: Please do.
- Martha Beck: Okay. Hold that thought about the novel though.
- Rowan Mangan: Got it. Le pause.



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- Martha Beck: When we lived in California, somebody gave us a horse because it was-
- Rowan Mangan: That's what happens when you live in California?
- Martha Beck: We had a place to put it and this horse was really old and-
- Rowan Mangan: In the corner.
- Martha Beck: ... really furry. I mean really furry. It looked like a woolly mammoth. It's not funny really, because there's a condition called Cushing's disease that makes them really furry. But it looked like a Teddy bear imitation of a horse. Sweetest horse on earth named Buddy.
- Rowan Mangan: Buddy, the horse. I remember Buddy. Sweet Buddy boy.
- Martha Beck: I tried to shave him because he was hot with all his fur.
- Rowan Mangan: Yeah, you did do that, didn't you?
- Martha Beck: I took my hair clipping and implements which I used to cut people hair down to the barn, and I started shaving that horse, 12 hours a day. I would fill, I'm not exaggerating, huge garbage cans full of hair. Buddy looked like he'd been attacked by a hoard of locusts. It was not good.
- Rowan Mangan: This is why you see that, having Martha slither across the floor in a robe is really a very mild kind of strange thing to have.
- Martha Beck: Par for the course. My body rejoiced when I wanted to shave a horse.
- Rowan Mangan: You got to tweet that. "My body rejoiced when I wanted to shave a horse."
- Martha Beck: It's the truth.
- Rowan Mangan: There's a reason this show is called Bewildered, because it's how you feel right now.
- Martha Beck: Just come in the middle at any point. Buddy was such a sweet horse. And I would go out and I'd saddle him up, and I learned to ride on Buddy, because he was so gentle and sweet. There's a thing called a mounting block. It's a little, step stool.
- Rowan Mangan: If you're a short person.



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- Martha Beck: You saddle your horse, you put the mounting block next to the horse. You climb up, put your left foot in the left stirrup, so you're on the horse's left side. Always. You know why? Because your sword would be carried on your right side.
- Rowan Mangan: Mine wouldn't. I'm left-handed.
- Martha Beck: Tough beans.
- Rowan Mangan: I would get killed so fast.
- Martha Beck: That's the left-handed curse. We should do a whole nother podcast on it.
- Rowan Mangan: Oh yes.
- Martha Beck: Anyway, you do get on your horse's left side. And then you swing, gracefully and gently and lightly, you swing your right leg over the horse and settle gently onto his back, so as not to hurt his back.
- Rowan Mangan: Just basically float through the air like a gymnast.
- Martha Beck: Yeah, because they're not machines, they're creatures. I got Buddy ready. And we'd done this with a teacher before and I was going to do it myself. I put the mounting block on, I got up, I put my left foot in the stirrup. I went to swing my leg and as I swung my leg, Buddy took two slow steps forward.
- Rowan Mangan: Oh, Buddy. Buddy said, "Are you sure I'm the right horse?"
- Martha Beck: Yeah. Splits, fall down. Buddy looks at me, "Hello." Get up, bring Buddy back to the mounting block. One step, two step, left foot in the stirrup, swing. Buddy steps forward, one, two. Splits, on the ground. This went on for like a day.
- Rowan Mangan: I'm getting the feeling that this might've been a deliberate revenge for the shaving incident.
- Martha Beck: Well, we'll find out, because I'm planning to shave you next.
- Rowan Mangan: I'm not going to touch that.
- Martha Beck: Not going to touch it? Well, there you go. Oh my God. We're into that territory. Nothing's coming back now. Anyway, the whole point is, the Chinese sociology thing was massive. Sometimes the horse just steps a little bit out of reach and you just can't. You keep trying to can, and you can't and you can't. And that's how it was with you and that version of the novel. It's just not there ever.



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- Rowan Mangan: It just kept stepping out of reach. That works. I like it. I like the metaphor. Okay. My novel kept taking two slow steps away from me, to teach me a lesson about shaving it when it didn't want to be shaved. Anyway, the solution with my novel was that I had to do a blank page rewrite of the second draft and it became a completely different horse, as it were. Completely different goat, at that.
- Martha Beck: You stepped back, you did le pause.
- Rowan Mangan: I le paused. For a few years.
- Martha Beck: Then you basically said, "How do I want it to feel this time? How do I want it to be this time?" How did you re-approach that?
- Rowan Mangan: It's definitely got to be about how do I want it to feel? I think I want a good story. I want to be fascinated, I want to be gripped. I want to feel the way you felt when you were doing your sociology stuff. Right? I wanted to feel energetic. I wanted to feel excited.
- Martha Beck: You're thinking through thoughts, how to start the novel again, and you hit on what? A line, a scene, an idea? Because often it's in the mind that you first are able to like picture the horse you do want to get back on.
- Rowan Mangan: Yeah. And to me it was very much about the voice of the protagonist, not to get into the novel too much. But it was about, I want to read this kind of book. I want it to feel this way. I want it to taste this way as I'm reading it or writing it.
- Martha Beck: I remember. Because I read it, and the first draft was very literary, which is an excellent, I have to say it was brilliantly written.
- Rowan Mangan: It was really not.
- Martha Beck: It was all classical music, and there was one paragraph where it was more like jazz.
- Rowan Mangan: That's right.
- Martha Beck: And I said, "That, that, that, that. What if you wrote the whole thing like that?"
- Rowan Mangan: And in that way, Marty saved my damned book. God bless you
- Martha Beck: That's why they call me, "Life coach."



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- Rowan Mangan: So I rewrote the whole thing based on the voice in that one paragraph, and it was delicious. But I think what we need to do is, just ask ourselves, before you get on the horse - le pause. "What does my body want? What makes my body feel that way? What does my heart want? What does my soul want?" Because if it's our minds that are driving, that's going to get really fast into the tyranny of what-
- Martha Beck: That's right.
- Rowan Mangan: What is it? The tyranny of what?
- Martha Beck: How it's done.
- Rowan Mangan: How it's done. The tyranny of how it's done. The brain makes that shit up.
- Martha Beck: It's interesting because what you're saying brings you into the present moment. We always look at the past to see what we've done in the future to see what we want to achieve. Then we try to sort of orient. But in that process, we lose the present moment, which is where all our senses are saying, "Yum," to one thing and "Yuck," to another.
- Rowan Mangan: Yes.
- Martha Beck: You have to kind of forget your past and forget your future and just say, "What's yummy right now? What's delicious?"
- Rowan Mangan: I think that if in that moment of presence, that's when you're actually available to be told what is right. In pausing, in being in the moment, you're ripe to be given the guidance.
- Martha Beck: Can I bring in something called the eureka effect? And I mean seriously on psychology, it's called the eureka effect.
- Rowan Mangan: I wish you would.
- Martha Beck: It's based on the idea that when you work something, work a problem, work a problem, and it's not going anywhere, the way to get your brain to solve the problem on its own, is to completely break from the activity and do something different. It was Archimedes, he was getting in the bathtub trying to solve this question. "How do I know the mass of the king's crown without being able to measure it?" I don't remember what way.
- Rowan Mangan: And he thought, "I need some self care. I'm going to take a bubble bath."



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Martha Beck: Yeah. He gets into the bubble bath, and he goes, "Eureka," which means, "I found it." He was so excited.

Rowan Mangan: I often think that when I climb into the bath tub. It's like there it is.

Martha Beck: Took off my shorts and I found it. What he thought as he got into the water was, "A body immersed in water, displaces a body of water equal to its own mass."

Rowan Mangan: Boom.

Martha Beck: Mic drop.

Rowan Mangan: Duh.

Martha Beck: And he went running through the streets, naked, shouting, "Eureka, Eureka." And this takes me to a quote from Herman Melville in Moby Dick, when he says, "Get a man thinking and put him on his feet and he will lead you to water." It's usually when I am stuck with something and I don't know what horse to get back on, I go into a part of nature that is moving.

Martha Beck: I walk or there does seem to be something about the bathtub and the river. Water flows. And so, literally, physically think about something else, go out for a walk or watch a waterfall or whatever it does that distracts you and brings you into the present moment. What happens is that the problem is being worked out in the lower levels of the brain, which you're not conscious of, and they're not verbal. You can almost feel it, like there's a sense of something rising and dawning. Like something's just scratching at the door to get in.

Rowan Mangan: I know that feeling.

Martha Beck: Then you're just like, you get to the river, you're watching the water and boom, "Eureka," the problem solves itself. A whole new horse comes into view. And you're like, that's the horse I've been looking for. That's when you get on.

Rowan Mangan: I love that. So maybe as well as pausing before you get back on the horse, do something to do with movement?

Martha Beck: Yeah. I think that should be part of Le pause. Unless moving is what you're doing, like my marathon runner client. Take a pause from whatever you're doing, but go into a natural space. That affinity with water isn't necessary, of course. But I do think watching something that moves like a fire or wind in the grass, anything like that. And the motion of walking is what always gets me out of stuck places.



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Martha Beck: It's interesting because, when you come to your senses that way, the effect of flow, the fact that everything is always changing, is the kind of paradoxical opposite of the absolute present. You're in the absolute present, where you're not looking at past and future. But at the same time, the present is continuously moving. It's never the same moment to moment. You begin to flow with the present, but without looking at past or future.

Rowan Mangan: Got it. And that's part of disengaging the mind and all that it thinks.

Martha Beck: Yeah. I think that's why Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, try to look that one up, it's the hardest word to pronounce in the English language, because it's not English. Csikszentmihalyi called the state of optimal pleasure for a human, he called it flow. It's at that space where you're trying to find the right horse to get on, and you allow yourself to move and to chew on the problem and then release it. Then you go into this state of flow where you recognize that everything is changing. So something about that, will flow you into a solution that you may not even have thought of.

Rowan Mangan: You know what I love about that, is it just makes me think that, to follow our metaphor, that when you get on the horse that is inspired by that state, the flow of how you're going to move with that horse. It's going to be that sort of beautiful symphony of something that you're doing that is actually also belongs to the state of flow.

Martha Beck: Oh my gosh. It reminds me of the writing lessons I took from our friend Katya, who fell off the horse, and now knows that Mozart is not the president. Apparently she thought it was before she fell off the horse. I don't know. Anyway, the difference between taking riding lessons from anyone else and taking riding lessons from her is, this presence thing. Literally, when you get on a horse, it's not a horse that's ever been before, and it's not a you that's ever been before.

Rowan Mangan: Ooh, yeah.

Martha Beck: It's like, Heraclitus said, "No man steps in the same river twice, because the water is always flowing." But then my friend, Stephen, the Zen monk said, "And no person ever steps in the river, who was the person they were a minute before. Everything's always shifting." When Katya rides and what she tried to get me to do, unsuccessfully, is she's so present in that moment with the horse. And I did feel it occasionally.



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- Martha Beck: The difference between the horse and your body disappears. She used to have me say in my head, as the horse walked and my body moved, she'd have me say, "I am with you. You are with me. I am with you. You are with me." Then she dropped the with and she'd say, "I am you. You are me. I am you. You are me." It works with books, it works with paintings. it works with fricking housework, making bread from grass. If you are one with the thing you're doing, that flow is able to take over and the whole ride becomes kind of magnificent.
- Rowan Mangan: I love this so much. I think I would be doing our listeners a disservice, if I didn't say that you have to become a centaur. "I am you, you are me. I am a centaur now."
- Martha Beck: Totally. When you see really great riders, you understand why people who had never seen people riding a horse thought it was a centaur. They are one animal. It's pretty cool.
- Rowan Mangan: It's incredibly cool.
- Martha Beck: How to get back to work when you've been away. Well, you have to become a centaur.
- Rowan Mangan: Step one.
- Martha Beck: Figure that one out. Boom. How many times have I said boom, during this podcast? It's okay.
- Rowan Mangan: Not enough. Boom.
- Martha Beck: There's this whole thing of becoming completely present, feeling the body, we're back in our senses and then the right horse, when it shows up, we recognize it and getting on it is bonding with it in a way where it expands our sense of self. There's so much joy in the flow of that experience. Why would anyone ever want to do anything else?
- Rowan Mangan: You know what it makes me think of, our beloved, Karen, who is one of those people who sort of flies under the radar a little bit. She lives her life. Then every now and again, you just get this glimpse of her pure, amazing majesty. We were having a conversation with her once and it was all about like, "What do you want to be doing? How do you want to be living dah, dah, dah." One of these sort of things.
- Rowan Mangan: Karen sort of said to us, "I don't really go and grab things. I just wait for the right thing to float by." I think Marty and I were both in a mood at the time where we were like, "Ugh. Waiting to float by. [crosstalk 00:49:55]."



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Martha Beck: "What are you a sea anemone?"

Rowan Mangan: The frenemy of my frenemy is my enemy. We live alone in the woods. We make our own fun.

Martha Beck: And our own people. We made a person.

Rowan Mangan: We made a person.

Martha Beck: You made a person.

Rowan Mangan: You helped.

Martha Beck: So Rowe, all our folks are out there. Sometimes they're on horses.

Rowan Mangan: I hope so.

Martha Beck: Sometimes they fall off.

Rowan Mangan: I'm sorry.

Martha Beck: Literally, figuratively, Mozart is not the president, I'll tell you that right now. But everybody's got a different thing that they're trying to get back onto. A metaphorical horse. No matter what they're trying to do, what's this process, we've just illuminated?

Rowan Mangan: Coming to our senses, when getting on horses, you might say. I think what we've established in this meandering conversation of ours, is that the first thing we want to do is pause-

Martha Beck: Pause.

Rowan Mangan: ... before getting on the horse. Don't just clamber back up on that horse-

Martha Beck: It'll walk away.

Rowan Mangan: ... for goodness sake. If anything, it'll walk away. If you're lucky, it'll walk away.

Martha Beck: If you're lucky, if you're not lucky, curtains.

Rowan Mangan: If you're not lucky, it's a bitey, bitey, zebra.



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- Martha Beck: It's a kicky, kicky, [inaudible 00:51:04]. Not good.
- Rowan Mangan: Not good at all. So pause, for God's sake, pause.
- Martha Beck: For Gods sake, if you value your life, pause.
- Rowan Mangan: You've paused? Then what happens? You want to be in the present, right?
- Martha Beck: Yeah.
- Rowan Mangan: Presence.
- Martha Beck: Available to whatever's happening in this moment. Don't think too much about past. Don't think too much about future,
- Rowan Mangan: Just don't think too much.
- Martha Beck: Actually not thinking as a very good idea. Even though the culture says, if you're not thinking you're being stupid, actually, a lot of people who are thinking are acting stupid. And you get into that flow zone, you can solve amazing problems, because as Einstein said, "You're no longer in the system of logic that created the problem." You get smarter.
- Rowan Mangan: Amazing. Then once we're in the present, we're not using our brains too much, we can feel for what's energizing.
- Martha Beck: Use the whole neurological circuitry of the body. Because the brain is not artificially disconnected from the rest of the body. Right?
- Rowan Mangan: Good point.
- Martha Beck: You could think, we think with our whole nervous systems and the body is going to tell us what's energizing.
- Rowan Mangan: Oh, that's cool. We talked earlier about different areas of our lives that we might be wanting to get back on horses.
- Martha Beck: Yes. Like you talked about the postpartum thing where you're supposed to spring back into being some sort of fancy, pre partum chick.
- Rowan Mangan: Right. I'm not that anymore. I'm breastfeeding, I'm doing all these things.



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- Martha Beck: You weren't doing that before you had a baby. Why would you?
- Rowan Mangan: Only recreationally.
- Martha Beck: It's a good occupation.
- Rowan Mangan: It is.
- Martha Beck: A wet nurse. Okay. For me, it's more like it's about aging. Everyday after you're 40, you get up and then look in the mirror and say, "What fresh hell is this? That's not me." Over and over, you confront this question, "Do I just age gracefully? Or do I try to keep looking like I'm 30 and look really different, but not necessarily like I'm 30."
- Martha Beck: It really helps me to remember this story from Ram Dass. His first name was Richard Alpert. Then he became like a monk and he became Ram Dass. He was a big spiritual teacher. Then he had a stroke. And it pretty much leveled him. He could talk a little, but he couldn't really move very well. All his acolytes got around him and they said, "Ram Dass, don't worry. You'll be up walking for sure, really fast." In the slow, new way he had of talking, he said, "I think I'll sit for a while." I remember that so often when I feel like something's getting away from me and I'm like, all verklempt and trying to hang on. "I think they'll sit for a while. What's wrong with that?"
- Rowan Mangan: It makes me think of one of our really strong cultural stories is; "He's a fighter." When someone's sick, even when they're terminally sick and they're being told, "You can do this. Fight it, fight it. Your battle with cancer. You are on the battle field." I've heard a lot of people say, "I don't want to fight. My body knows that what's happening here is my positive attitude is not going to change this."
- Martha Beck: And that's a perfect example of pausing, getting out of the cultural consensus, coming to your own senses about what your body needs at any given moment. Eventually, it's not going to want to keep fighting. Might not be today, but when it happens, go gently into that good night.
- Rowan Mangan: For God's sake. Do not rage against the dying of light.
- Martha Beck: Do not rage against the dying of light. Because it's not going to help.
- Rowan Mangan: No.



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- Martha Beck: At least granddad was sick for two months, but at least he was furious entire time.
- Rowan Mangan: He raged and raged and it was fantastic.
- Martha Beck: Thank God. This might be quite triggering for some out there.
- Rowan Mangan: Its a challenge.
- Martha Beck: I don't want to meet and say your loved one should give up the fight. We want to hang on, but this is just the thing, is that a horse we want to get back on once the body has gone past its use by date?
- Rowan Mangan: Look at the way you just worded that, give up the fight. Maybe the thing is we question, is it a fight?
- Martha Beck: Fighting with nature.
- Rowan Mangan: Fighting with ourselves, fighting with our body. Is that what's actually happening?
- Martha Beck: Right now, we've been talking a lot about our pets. There's a very sad thing going on in Australia with Rowe's dog.
- Rowan Mangan: My old dog who lives with my lovely mama now, is coming to the end of his days.
- Martha Beck: The thing is, he's not fighting.
- Rowan Mangan: No, he's not fighting.
- Martha Beck: He goes out and he sits outside and his various organs are failing and he watches the breeze and he does not try to get up and go running around the neighborhood, like he used to.
- Rowan Mangan: No. He's not fighting.
- Martha Beck: When you're watching someone go consciously toward that big door, there's a kind of luminosity in depth, even with an animal, that comes up, that is profoundly true. Because they're not, "I've got to to live on for at least 10 more years." What are you going to do for the 10 more years? That's a big [inaudible 00:56:17]. Actually, it's not.
- Rowan Mangan: It's not.



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- Martha Beck: Because that's something we all have to face eventually. It's a really important thing not to get back on that horse when that's not the horse you want to get on.
- Rowan Mangan: Absolutely. So bodies, yeah man. Totally. Relationships was another area we talked about. A horse that we might want to get back on.
- Martha Beck: I love thinking about my... I say we're supposed to keep the embers hot for life. Well, one couple I know that actually is still like crazy mad in love in their mid '70s, are Byron Katie and Stephen Mitchell, her husband. One of the things I love most about them, they're crazy about each other, they're like teenagers. But their wedding ceremony, they had the person marrying them, I don't know who it was.
- Rowan Mangan: The only vows that they had as part of their wedding.
- Martha Beck: The vow was, "I promise to love you until I don't."
- Rowan Mangan: How perfect is that?
- Martha Beck: Well, the guy wouldn't say it. He refused to say it.
- Rowan Mangan: Oh, really?
- Martha Beck: He had to give a little speech on eternal love or whatever. Steven had to take him out back and spank him a little. Not, literally.
- Rowan Mangan: Whatever it takes to keep the spice in your relationship.
- Martha Beck: Stephen gave him a dressing down. Gave him a real talking to. Because they wanted that. "I promise to love you till I don't." Because nothing else is true. Nothing else allows for change. And change is continuous. Both of them know that. That's what they wanted to say to each other. Which is so liberating, right?
- Rowan Mangan: Yeah. What other promise can we ever give anyone, but, "I will until I don't?"
- Martha Beck: Exactly.
- Rowan Mangan: Love it.
- Martha Beck: That was wonderful. Our relationship changed after the baby. You started tracking sleep and feeding and everything. I was just like, "La, la, la. I'll poke you in the belly button."



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- Rowan Mangan: We have different approaches to stuff like this. I was in my little like, okay, busy little beaver getting the apps. And, "Okay. She slept for this long and now it's time for her to eat." And dah, dah, dah, dah.
- Martha Beck: I was like, whatever. Until you finally said, "I can't do this by myself. You've got to stop poking the baby when she's supposed to be sleeping." I was like, "Ooh, I got to follow all the apps and things." It turned out really well. But it's a completely different way of relating to each other.
- Rowan Mangan: Well, I think we found a really happy medium between your more like 'go with the moment' and my more 'plan-y sort of anal approach'.
- Martha Beck: So we both changed.
- Rowan Mangan: We both changed.
- Martha Beck: It's okay. It may be different in the next minute.
- Rowan Mangan: I hope so.
- Martha Beck: So that's relationship stuff. Then there's career. A lot of people have shifted their jobs, at the time we're recording this, because of COVID. And there's the whole idea of once we're all vaccinated, let's go back to the way we were doing it before. I don't think that's going to make sense for everyone.
- Rowan Mangan: Well, I think it already hasn't. It's such a fascinating thing, we had a pandemic and something that had nothing really to do with the pandemic was, that we suddenly realized that the technology that we rely on, we can rely on a lot more and there goes the commute.
- Martha Beck: Boom.
- Rowan Mangan: And we already know that there's so many businesses that aren't going to go back to an in-person working model.
- Martha Beck: Doesn't make sense. It's throwing money into the wind, really. Because we don't need to go to the commonplace where we all used to work like a factory.
- Rowan Mangan: But what's interesting, is that's happening at a cultural level. That's becoming a new consensus. But when we start doing these things for ourselves, like our own little moments of pausing,



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before jumping back on a horse, it can lead you to doing things that are going to look weird to the culture.

- Martha Beck: They could look very strange. One day you could be sitting in a business suit at a conference table and the next day you could be sitting in a nice top, but no pants-
- Rowan Mangan: While slithering.
- Martha Beck: Slithers, cockatoo.
- Rowan Mangan: Cockatoo crested.
- Martha Beck: Crested cockatoo in wearable blanket, slithering across the floor behind you, while you square your jaw and stare into the camera, willing the other people in the meeting, not to see what they are seeing.
- Rowan Mangan: You too could have this life, dear listener.
- Martha Beck: You just need a wearable blanket and a baby.
- Rowan Mangan: And a right attitude.
- Martha Beck: And the right attitude. Do not give up. Okay, sum it up for us.
- Rowan Mangan: When we want to get back on the horse, here's something to try.
- Martha Beck: Three steps.
- Rowan Mangan: Three steps. First, le pause.
- Martha Beck: Le pausing, right now. Is it the right horse?
- Rowan Mangan: Is this the right horse?
- Martha Beck: Do I want to get back on it? How do I want to get back on it? I could get back on it backwards. Who knows.
- Rowan Mangan: Step two, le presence.
- Martha Beck: Available to the moment. Not in past or future. Everything's flowing. Everything's now. Yada di da.



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- Rowan Mangan: Not too big a role for the old brain box in that stage. And finally, from le pause and le presence, look for le fun.
- Martha Beck: Le fun. Does it energize you? Does it make you excited? Does it make you happy? Does it make you relax? It might not always make you happy, but it will make you feel relaxed. The thing I already always tell everyone, it will make you feel free.
- Rowan Mangan: Free.
- Martha Beck: The energy will feel free. That is what the Buddhist said, "You can always taste enlightenment because it tastes of freedom."
- Rowan Mangan: Yeehaw.
- Martha Beck: Whatever horse you get on at that point will take you directly to enlightenment.
- Rowan Mangan: Yay, thank you.
- Martha Beck: Thanks for coming back with us, you guys, as we climb back on the horse of our podcast.
- Rowan Mangan: We will be galloping by you again sometime soon. Hope so.
- Martha Beck: Yay.
- Rowan Mangan: In the meantime, stay wild.
- Martha Beck: Stay wild.

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