



# BEWILDERED

WITH MARTHA BECK  
AND ROWAN MANGAN

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## Episode #44: Wild Energy

*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] Hi, I'm Martha Beck!
- Rowan Mangan: And I'm Rowan Mangan, and this is another episode of Bewildered, the podcast for people trying to figure it out.
- Martha Beck: Not unlike Rowan Mangan, my delightful co-host here.
- Rowan Mangan: How dare you, Martha Beck? How dare you assume that I haven't got it all figured out? Just because I walk through my life confused, and crying, and miserable, and constantly say, "I just can't figure it out," I just think it's very rude of you to just go right into the assumption that I'm trying to figure it out.
- Martha Beck: Mm-hmm, you're exactly right. I think you are walking amongst us in disguise as a person who has not figured it out, but actually on the inside you've got it all figured out. That is the entire basis of my relationship with you.
- Rowan Mangan: And it's a lie.
- Martha Beck: It's a lie, [inaudible 00:01:31]-
- Rowan Mangan: I haven't got it figured out Marty, I was just kidding.
- Martha Beck: Damn it, damn it, I was hoping you did.
- Rowan Mangan: Yeah, no, I don't know anything.
- Martha Beck: Okay. So tell us what you're trying to figure out majorly.



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- Rowan Mangan: All right. My thing that I'm trying to figure out, regular listeners to our show will know that there's a little bit of a theme in our lives, Marty, of having issues with robot servants. And we are equal opportunity robot servant employers. So not long ago there was a thing called Prime Day, Amazon Prime Day.
- Martha Beck: Oh, Prime Day.
- Rowan Mangan: And we got a little bit over-excited by the massive sales.
- Martha Beck: The marketing works.
- Rowan Mangan: I'm so sorry to be, I don't want to be advertising Amazon for God's sake. But anyway, we have a friend who has a playlist on Amazon Music, and then there was a big sale, and we wanted to listen to that playlist, and boom, two Alexa Dots turned up in our... Is that what they called it, Echo Dots? Alexa Echo Dots.
- Martha Beck: Echo Dots, so these little round things, they're like the size of a softball sometimes. Some are bigger, a little bit like a soccer ball. Anyway they're ball-shaped, and they sit on your shelf and create lovely soundage.
- Rowan Mangan: They are always listening.
- Martha Beck: They are always, that's the thing. They speak and you think, "Oh, speakers, I know speakers." But you're not used to a listener in that ball.
- Rowan Mangan: Yeah. And it's weird that everything that is spoken... I mean, let's not go down the conspiracy route, but I'm pretty sure... No, listen, here's what we did, and here's what I'm trying to figure out, is how to make peace in our household, and joy, and relaxation frankly. Because this is a scene that I witnessed between you and Karen a few days ago, there's an Alexa Echo Dot thing.
- Martha Beck: It's an Echo Dot, but its name is Alexa. It wishes to be referred to as Alexa, and God help you if you say anything that sounds like Alexa because it will respond.
- Rowan Mangan: It will. So there's one of those little round things, and Marty and Karen are there trying to put festive music on, and-
- Martha Beck: Festive holiday music, because this happened at a holiday moment.
- Rowan Mangan: It did. And then, basically there's another one in another room, but it's all-



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- Martha Beck: Because we got two for Prime Day. They were like, throwing them at you for nothing.
- Rowan Mangan: But they all listen, and then the one in the other room could hear us when we were trying to talk to the one who was here-
- Martha Beck: From like blocks away it can hear you.
- Rowan Mangan: It is crazy. And so it all culminated in, "Alexa." "Yes?" "Yes?" "No, not you Alexa." "Yes?" "Yes?" "Play this." And then the other room Alexa starts playing it, and then this room Alexa starts playing it, and before we know it... I should stop saying Alexa.
- Martha Beck: It's like, I'll be one Alexa, and you then be the other in the other room. "Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way."
- Rowan Mangan: "Dashing through the snow."
- Martha Beck: We were like, "What, what's happening to us?"
- Rowan Mangan: It was very confusing, and it culminated in Marty and Karen hunched over the little round robot servant that was in our room, whispering, "Alexa." And then if one of them raised their voices a little bit the other one would go, "Shh, shh, it can hear you."
- Martha Beck: "Alexa, shut up. Not you Alexa, shut... No, what?"
- Rowan Mangan: Yeah, it was sort of like the Cold War.
- Martha Beck: It was.
- Rowan Mangan: Or the Second World War, all those people doing radio communications, and-
- Martha Beck: Yeah, and everyone's listening to everyone, and you can't trust anyone, and they're broadcasting inadvertently.
- Rowan Mangan: It's exactly like that but with Jingle Bells.
- Martha Beck: Thank God our daughter Lila... Of course we named her Lila so that she would be sure to not pronounce her Ls, so she goes over to Alexa and goes, "Ayexa, Ayexa." It won't respond to Ayexa, because God help us if it did.
- Rowan Mangan: It sort of half-listens sometimes, it's like trying to encourage her. It like flickers its little ear a little bit, you know how it has the light? And it's like, "Almost there." So that's me. Marty, what are you trying to figure out please?



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- Martha Beck: It's cacophony, it's cacophony around, and then that's probably why it's cacophony within. Because I sit and I meditate, you know? And it's gotten all cold so I have to bundle up to meditate. So I'm in this wad of blankets meditating away in the morning. Ugh, you have to be warm in the morning. Anyway, there's this thing that in Asia they call the monkey mind, right? It's always saying things like, "Why are you in a wad of blankets, why aren't you doing something useful, why are you such a terrible meditator?" And they call that the monkey mind, and you're supposed to make friends with it. Well, somehow my... You know how everything's listening to us, Ro?
- Rowan Mangan: Yeah.
- Martha Beck: Like your phone starts spewing up references to things that you have vaguely mentioned to a friend, like, "I want a tiny house," suddenly there's nothing but tiny house ads in your thread, whatever the thread is.
- Rowan Mangan: It doesn't know about things.
- Martha Beck: Is it a thread, it's a pool, it's a river, I don't know what it is. Anyway, I got out of nowhere a text containing... Well, maybe it was just on... I don't know, it was on-
- Rowan Mangan: She doesn't know.
- Martha Beck: ... one of my things that came into my phone. And it was in Chinese, which I should be able to read but I can't because I forgot. I can renew, but it had an English translation.
- Rowan Mangan: Can I just interrupt for one-
- Martha Beck: Yes.
- Rowan Mangan: ... second and say, I asked you what you were trying to figure out and so far we don't know what the story's about. But you've given me about nine things that you cannot figure out, mostly where these little chunks of information come from your phone into your brain. You have no idea where they've come from.
- Martha Beck: Completely bewildering, it just comes from all directions. It's kind of fun, I have to say it is sort of the spice of life, not knowing what the hell is going on. "Oh, oh." Anyway, this said in English, the translation, "A wild monkey appeared. The wild monkey bites, brutality."
- Rowan Mangan: Wow.



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Martha Beck: Yes. "Don't feed him and don't fight him, even if you fight you can't win."

Rowan Mangan: And this just came from an unknown caller on your phone.

Martha Beck: Sort of, yeah. I mean it had a picture of the wild monkey, he didn't look like he was biting brutality. He was just looking at a thing in his hand, but it's like, I knew looking at him, the dread of it came up to me and I was like, "Something knows that the monkey in my mind has evolved into something that bites brutality. And even if I don't feed him and don't fight him-"

Rowan Mangan: Just, sorry, this is some sort of English translation of some sort-

Martha Beck: Yes.

Rowan Mangan: Can you just give a bit more, what is this thing actually? It was in Chinese, now-

Martha Beck: It was a sign that was posted somewhere in China, that's all I know. I don't know if it was like in a restroom, or a restaurant, or if it was in a children's classroom. But somewhere in China a wild monkey appeared, and the wild monkey bites brutality. But when you think about it, if I sat and let my monkey mind bite the brutality in my mind, maybe it would overcome the brutality. Anyway-

Rowan Mangan: Wow.

Martha Beck: ... it was terrifying, and I felt like the universe was giving me a message that I can't feed it, and I can't fight it, and even if I fight I can't win. So somehow I have to, in my meditations, let the wild monkey mind run around biting brutality, and I'm basically in a nihilistic downward spiral.

Rowan Mangan: It's fascinating, isn't it, how these... It just reads like poetry.

Martha Beck: It does, it's found poetry.

Rowan Mangan: And like really, really wise, ancient poetry.

Martha Beck: Yes, don't feed him and don't fight him.

Rowan Mangan: Don't feed him and don't fight him. I mean, that just takes me somewhere, like-

Martha Beck: I know.



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Rowan Mangan: ... "What does it mean-"

Martha Beck: The profundity.

Rowan Mangan: "... to feed a wild monkey that bites brutality?"

Martha Beck: You know what? You have come around from the ridiculous to the sublime, because that is exactly what you do if you have a panic attack. You don't feed it and you don't fight it, because even if you fight you can't win. You just solved the [inaudible 00:09:49] for me, you are like my sensei, my sifu. Is it sifu, the... I forget, I forgot all my... Anyway, let's go on. Go on, that's-

Rowan Mangan: I've got a quick Karenism before we get into today's-

Martha Beck: Oh, please.

Rowan Mangan: ... topic, which is super fun. So this was just a few days ago, Karen, our beloved Karen and I were talking about a friend who was coming over, is actually coming over later today. And I said, "Don't forget, our friend is vegan." And Karen's like, "Oh yeah, no, I thought about that already. I think we'll just give her some cheese and stuff." And I went, "Hmm. Yeah," and she's like, "What, is cheese considered-"

Martha Beck: Dairy?

Rowan Mangan: "... dairy now? Is cheese considered dairy now by all these woke people," whatever?

Martha Beck: "Oh, they just decided to include it."

Rowan Mangan: But I have to say she did the air quotes-

Martha Beck: Oh my goodness.

Rowan Mangan: ... on dairy.

Martha Beck: Dairy.

Rowan Mangan: "Is cheese considered dairy now? I mean, what next, people marrying animals, cows? Is fruit considered plant material now?" Anyway, so that's my quick little Karenism-

Martha Beck: Oh, Karenism.



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Rowan Mangan: We'll be right back with more Bewildered. I have a favor to ask. You might not know this, but ratings and reviews are like gold in the podcasting universe. They get podcasts in front of more faces, more eyes, more ears, all the bits that you could have a podcast in front of, that's what they do. So it would help us enormously if you would consider going over to your favorite podcasting app, especially if it's Apple, and giving us a few stars, maybe even five, maybe even six if you can find a way to hack the system I wouldn't complain, and a review would also be wonderful, we read them all and love them. So thank you very much in advance, let's just go out there and bewilder the world.

Today's topic, Marty, which is energy. That's what we wanted to talk about today, but I hasten to add not that energy.

Martha Beck: Not [inaudible 00:11:58] energy.

Rowan Mangan: Not that energy, not the energy that we were talking about when we were talking about spoons for instance, not that energy. That other-

Martha Beck: Also not energy like fuel energy.

Rowan Mangan: No, no, not the energy sector, or the renewable energy sector, or anything like that. No, we mean the other kind of energy, you know, the kind that you don't really talk about until you know someone quite well. What do we mean by energy, Marty? Kind of feel around for it.

Martha Beck: It's a kind of mood or feeling or intention that comes across without any words or any physical actions. So actually when you get to know someone, one might say that along with observing what they're doing and hearing what they say, you're also picking up on an energy that tells you whether you can say to this person, "I'm feeling an energy around you," and they may not punch you squarely in the face because you feel the energy. It's a sensation in the body and mind that doesn't seem either physical or emotional, it's just a, "Woo, woo," you know? But yeah-

Rowan Mangan: Yeah.

Martha Beck: ... there it is.

Rowan Mangan: And so it's that sort of thing that it's like we're emitting energy that's connected to how we're feeling in all kinds of ways, and that is something that people can read if they're attuned to it.



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- Martha Beck: And I think we always do, you know? People have actually said to me, like in business situations where they have a slip of the tongue and they'll say something like, "Well, he's great to work with but his energy can get kind of intense," or something. And they don't realize they're talking woo woo, but it kind of slides in there because the fact is I think we all experience this.
- Rowan Mangan: Yeah, I think so too. And yet it's one of these funny things that we come across sometimes with this podcast, where it's a little bit... The culture shies away from it, and because the culture shies away from it it exists in that area of like, is it NAF, I would say in my-
- Martha Beck: I have no idea what that means.
- Rowan Mangan: Yeah, if you don't know what that means it's impossible to translate.
- Martha Beck: Oh, well good.
- Rowan Mangan: [inaudible 00:14:05] for that, just enjoy.
- Martha Beck: Just read the energy of that word. Is it boodily boodily boo?
- Rowan Mangan: People who know, they just know.
- Martha Beck: What does NAF mean, my darling?
- Rowan Mangan: The way I'm using it, I mean sort of like a little bit-
- Martha Beck: Stupid?
- Rowan Mangan: ... awkwardly... Yeah, a little bit stupid, a little bit like... See, I'm struggling, it's a hard thing because it's like-
- Martha Beck: Like eye-rolly, cringey?
- Rowan Mangan: Yeah, like with the new agey sort of stuff, and it's like, "We all know that most of it is bloody true, and yet we can't say it because-"
- Martha Beck: We don't say it.
- Rowan Mangan: "... we don't want to seem like freaking idiots." Anyway, so let's talk a little bit more about what we mean by energy, while acknowledging that it's NAF. It's NAF, but guys, it's real.





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- Martha Beck: It's real, and we're all picking up on... I mean, you can tell when something changes in someone's energy if they're sick, or... I mean, the one that I always am interested in is when somebody's just interacting with you as a friend, and their energy turns to something like they want money from you, or maybe they decide you're sexually interesting, or something shifts. And they don't really say anything different, you just feel different. And you can tell it's coming from that.
- Rowan Mangan: Sexually interesting, like you're just like, "Hmm, never thought about it that way before." Yeah, no, I totally, totally agree. And it's not even just... I think often we confuse it for like you're picking that up and you think, "Oh, it must have been their tone of voice," you know? Or body language is the one that I always think people assign stuff to.
- Martha Beck: And that is real.
- Rowan Mangan: Yeah, of course. And it's all part of it. But you can even get a... You were saying sometimes you get an email and it's like, [inaudible 00:15:54].
- Martha Beck: One time, I mean this was so interesting, a while ago you read a text from someone that was a little bit odd and out of the blue. And I said, "Oh, he's drunk," just like, bang, he's drunk. And then I just looked at you because I don't even know people are drunk when they're drunk, I grew up Mormon, like, "Why are they acting that way? That's so strange."
- Rowan Mangan: Plus it was like early afternoon, and it was a professional interaction, and it was, yeah.
- Martha Beck: A person I've never met, and-
- Rowan Mangan: I was amazed by that.
- Martha Beck: ... you were like, "This is sort of clipped." And I was like, "Oh, he's drunk." And then later-
- Rowan Mangan: It turned out they were.
- Martha Beck: Somebody called back, and he was apologizing for being drunk. So there you go, it came from just this brief... It was literally three words. And I'm like, "Where did I get that?" And another one is, I actually have been working on this, but I can actually feel people getting angry at me. Often I feel it when they're not even in any way angry at me, but I have had the experience multiple times of somebody feeling offended and feeling it pick up, and suddenly their energy is with me in the room. I'm hypersensitive to anger.



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And then I find out yep, they were pissed off, they got mad at me for some reason.

Rowan Mangan: Yeah, you just talk about it as ick bombing, right?

Martha Beck: Ick bomb, if somebody's really after you, if they're really enraged you feel ick bombed.

Rowan Mangan: Yeah, and I definitely feel like you can sense that. And it's interesting because it's like, it's connected to attention. But it's also, there's a like size and intensity component to it. And I think it's really interesting with you because you are a public figure to a certain extent and-

Martha Beck: Are you mad at me because of that? Sorry, we just ask now. We just ask.

Rowan Mangan: Constantly asking each other.

Martha Beck: So I'm a public figure, yes. Go on about that.

Rowan Mangan: And as a speaker, public speaker and everything, you're sort of... There's this larger than life energy that you bring that isn't even woo woo energy, it's just literally the physical energy that you bring into a room.

Martha Beck: It's literally caffeine.

Rowan Mangan: And then you can have, so a lot of people responding to you with their energy. And I think that can happen like with live events that are done on Zoom, or you do broadcasts on Facebook and Instagram, and you talk a lot about how when the crowd's energy shifts as one you can kind of feel it.

Martha Beck: You know who talked to me about this once?

Rowan Mangan: Who?

Martha Beck: Oprah.

Rowan Mangan: No way.

Martha Beck: As we were talking about doing Zoom broadcasting as opposed to being live in the studio, and I said, "But you can still feel the energy." And she's like, "Oh yeah, you can completely feel the energy. You can follow it, it can shift." She's an absolute genius.



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Rowan Mangan: But she's also such a pro, at a certain level of professionalism, it doesn't matter if something's woo woo or not if you can use it to-

Martha Beck: It is pragmatic.

Rowan Mangan: Yeah, yeah, exactly. It's fascinating.

Martha Beck: That reminds me of a completely unrelated story. Can I tell it very briefly?

Rowan Mangan: Go on then.

Martha Beck: Okay, so when we lived on a ranch in California one of our water pipes broke way under the surface, it was buried like 10 feet down. And this gruff farmer comes over, totally pragmatic, nothing woo woo about him. And he's like, "Yeah, I have to find the break so I can dig down and fix it." So what does he do? He picks a stick that is in a Y shape and he freaking doused the spot, and that for those of you who don't know what dousing is, using a stick, you hold it up and you walk along. And when it senses water, the stick pulls downward. And he dug straight to the leak, and I was like, "Yeah, we all mock it and sneer at it as magical thinking, until it freaking works."

Rowan Mangan: Yeah, yeah. But that's slightly different, because that's-

Martha Beck: Completely different, actually.

Rowan Mangan: But it does fall into the same category of like weird, new age stuff where we feel a little bit uncomfortable because we just don't... You know, we talk about this stuff all the time, science hasn't caught up, blah blah blah blah.

Martha Beck: Blah blah blah.

Rowan Mangan: But I just wanted to mention that places can also-

Martha Beck: Oh my God.

Rowan Mangan: ... have energy, right? It's not just people.

Martha Beck: Intensely.

Rowan Mangan: And is that just like the, do we leave behind a residue of energy on the walls or something do you think?



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- Martha Beck: Well you know, every since... I've been obsessed with the idea that time isn't linear since I first sort of grokked it when I was 16, reading like Einstein for Dummies or whatever, and-
- Rowan Mangan: Yeah, except it wasn't, as you know, it's Einstein for the Overachieving Teenager.
- Martha Beck: Okay, so if time doesn't really exist, maybe every place holds all the energy of everything that happened there. So you've drove across the country from California to Pennsylvania listening to Hamilton, and there we bought a house on a place that is like half a mile from Hamilton's Revolutionary War headquarters. You know what I like to do? I walk around there, and I wonder if I'm walking through Alexander Hamilton at any point in... He's on the time scale, I'm in the space, we're both in the same space but at different times.
- Rowan Mangan: Do you ever like try to freak him out by going, "How does a bastard orphan son of a whore..." Actually I saw some-
- Martha Beck: People don't know what you're talking about unless they know the music.
- Rowan Mangan: Everyone knows-
- Martha Beck: Everyone knows.
- Rowan Mangan: ... what I'm talking about, it's a cultural phenomenon.
- Martha Beck: It is.
- Rowan Mangan: Yeah, so places have energy.
- Martha Beck: Yeah. And whenever we go to New York-
- Rowan Mangan: Oh my gosh, it's so funny.
- Martha Beck: ... it's so interesting, because I used to go to the publishing end of New York and I had a really kind of scared... It was all the massive buildings, and the massive corporations, this is back when publishing organizations were massive. And then, so I had kind of a skittery reaction to New York. But then you had a completely different reaction to New York that kind of brought me round.



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- Rowan Mangan: Yeah, we got to know the sort of downtown Manhattan, and the East Village, and all those sorts of areas, where it's much more on a human scale, and it's much more that feeling of a neighborhood and stuff. And now that we live there part time there's this funny thing that happens that we always talk about where I will be thinking about whatever boring stuff, work, Lila, logistics-
- Martha Beck: Sleep deprived, sick, under-nourished, whatever.
- Rowan Mangan: And I'm driving into Manhattan, and I know the drive quite well, so I'm just not even... But I come out of the tunnel, and I'm driving through the streets of Manhattan, and I will start grinning like a loon. And I'm not thinking about it, I'm not thinking about where I am, I'm not observing it really. Because you know how when you're just thinking when you're driving? And I'm suddenly like, "Why am I... Oh, it's the New York thing, it's the energy-"
- Martha Beck: So happy, so full of energy, yeah.
- Rowan Mangan: Yeah, I just love it, and it's not even a choice. It just happens every time.
- Martha Beck: You know the spot in the world that does that to me more than any other is Londolozi Game Preserve in South Africa, and I can travel... I have shown up there like after traveling a million hours, totally jet lagged, then doing a bunch of speeches to try to earn the air fare. And I'm absolutely dead, I show up at Londolozi, and they take me out in a Jeep, and suddenly I'm fresh as a daisy, I feel 20 years younger. The place just feeds me, and East Village feeds you. I like the East Village now too, partly watching you like a wilted flower suddenly come to life, it's very cool.
- Rowan Mangan: That's cool.
- Martha Beck: And I remember when I first went on Harvard campus. I was like, "Oh," I almost had to take a deep breath because I could feel the intensity of intellect and ambition, there was this intense... You know, I found it very delicious, but it was also like... It was intense, yeah.
- Rowan Mangan: Yeah, yeah. I mean, that sort of concentration of one thing in a place, you can sort of... I'm sure it just rises to the surface or whatever. I just want to talk about another experience I had-
- Martha Beck: Mm-hmm, yes, please.
- Rowan Mangan: ... in New York recently, because it's kind of a fascinating one I think. From our apartment window I can see the East River, and there's an Ani DiFranco song about the East River that I-



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- Martha Beck: Only one. Surely there must be 20.
- Rowan Mangan: There's actually a couple. But it was in my head because I kept looking, and I just wanted to find my way there, and that's something I always have done in cities, is just get curious about something, get down to the street level, and just find joy. And exploring on foot is something that has always... A new place has always been a massive passion of mine. So on this occasion I had Lila with me, so I got her in her stroller and I'm like, "All right, we're going to go down to the East River and we're going to see it."
- Martha Beck: Yeah, huh. That's what we'll do when we get there, we'll just see it.
- Rowan Mangan: Well, you know, there's... If you know the Ani Difranco line you know the Ani Difranco line, I don't need to say it. You know what? It's not that-
- Martha Beck: I don't know the Ani Difranco line, what is it?
- Rowan Mangan: The song that I'm thinking of goes, "Let's go down to the East River and throw something in, something we can't live without, then let's start again."
- Martha Beck: Were you going to throw Lila in the river?
- Rowan Mangan: I don't want to be drawn on that question, it never came up as it happens. So, I would never throw my child into a river.
- Martha Beck: So you were going to throw maybe Alexa in?
- Rowan Mangan: Yeah, yeah, that sounds more likely. All right, so I'm just like walking east, this is how I do.
- Martha Beck: Just by the sun.
- Rowan Mangan: Yeah, man. And I'm coming across all these things, and I'm like, it's a completely different neighborhood suddenly that I haven't got to. And just before I realize that there's this thing called FDR Drive that completely stops you if you are someone with a stroller at the time, or anything with wheels, it's hard to get over that big freaking road. So I'm like, "Ah, the baby is getting fretful." And I'm like, "I need a playground stat." And so I ended up quite close to the East River in this sort of... Like in a sort of housing project sort of area where there was this one sad little playground, and I was like, "Okay, get your energy out kiddo." And I'm standing there, and it's probably about 10:00, 10:30 in the morning.



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So there's a number of these sort of high-rise apartment blocks around, but between it's like common space, do you know?

Martha Beck: Right, right.

Rowan Mangan: If you can picture the kind of thing, it's not on the street. And so I'm there, and Lila's sort of playing on the playground, and I just suddenly slowly started feeling really uneasy. And I'm looking around, trying to figure out what's going on with my spidey senses. There's not that many people around, but it's early on I think a Sunday morning so I'm like, "Oh well, it's time for people to just be at home, or sleeping in," or whatever. But then when there were people I felt scared, a little bit scared. And I called you, I think, yeah.

Martha Beck: Yeah, I remember you called from this place and you were like, "This is-"

Rowan Mangan: And I was like-

Martha Beck: "... this is spooky, something's really scary here," yeah.

Rowan Mangan: Yeah. And honestly, to be really, really frank about what... I was like, "Marty, am I having a racist moment? Am I thinking about The Wire or something and thinking that there are guns around or something like that?" Because I didn't know, and I'm trying to... We're going to talk about interpretation later. And I was just like, "What is this?" And what I said to Marty was, "I have to stop behaving the way I behaved as a young, single, childless person, because now I've got a kid and I can't just go wherever I want to go anymore. I need to think it through, because I'm really uneasy." And I eventually got her back in the stroller, and got her home. And I was like, "Well, the lesson of that weird encounter was that I can't take Lila places." Well, guess what happened? I came home to-

Martha Beck: This is so interesting.

Rowan Mangan: ... Country Mouse House, and Karen, out of nowhere, says to me, "Hey, did you hear about this thing with arsenic in New York?" And I'm like, "What?" And she said, "Yeah, there's this housing development where they've..." Or housing development, is that what you...

Martha Beck: Kind of a, yeah, neighborhood, a block of apartments, yeah.

Rowan Mangan: Yeah, like one of those little communities. And they found arsenic in the water, and-





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- Martha Beck: Yeah, of these particular apartment buildings.
- Rowan Mangan: Yeah, and so Eric Adams the mayor was going down there that day bringing all this fresh water, and it was on the news, and it was this whole huge event. And that was all happening, like here, the memo arrived and everything probably an hour or so after I was there. But it was just the most fascinating, validating experience, because I totally misread what was going on-
- Martha Beck: Totally, yeah.
- Rowan Mangan: ... with my brain, but my body was just like, "Something's wrong." And what was happening was people were scared-
- Martha Beck: Right, thousands of people.
- Rowan Mangan: ... and I was feeling their fear, and-
- Martha Beck: I think you're probably right.
- Rowan Mangan: And it's weird, because the only thing I could imagine was going on, because that would never have occurred to me, is I'm scared of them. But I was actually scared with them.
- Martha Beck: So interesting. Yeah, interpretation, we will talk about this in a minute. But you were so freaked out, and it exactly matched the feeling of thousands of people going, "Oh my God, we're drinking poison!" It was so creepy. It reminds me of when I walked past a TV that was showing Princess Diana's funeral, and I had never followed... She seemed nice enough, I just don't pursue celebrity interests. And a wave of grief hit me so hard that I just burst into tears like I'd lost my best friend, and I was crying and crying going, "I don't know a thing about this woman." But I could feel that there were a lot of people who did, and who were grieving, and it hit me the way that hit you. It wasn't like, "Oh, maybe I feel a slight something." It was like being hit by a tornado or something, wham, energy.
- Rowan Mangan: Yeah, energy. And of course the culture, as we know and we've already touched on, is like, "No, no, there's no such thing as that," what we just talked about it.
- Martha Beck: It is to laugh. All real things are measurable with my handy dandy measuring tool that I have.
- Rowan Mangan: My little measuring tool.
- Martha Beck: It's a cup, and Alexa. I will measure things.





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Rowan Mangan: Yes, exactly. Like you've got to measure it, you've got to be able to see it, like with some sort of instrument that may or may not exist yet. But I think we were saying it's further than that, because it's actually to the point that if you do believe in this you are-

Martha Beck: You get sneered at.

Rowan Mangan: Yeah, you're stupid.

Martha Beck: And there's this guy, he's a really good social scientist, his name is Dean Radin, and he wrote books like *The Conscious Universe*. And he does experiments on things like this, and he does them immaculately, they are so tightly controlled. They are absolutely perfect experiments, and he sees that yes, people do sense energy, and they do sense it across space, and they do sense it through time, they can feel things coming before they come. And people just mock, I mean he just spends all his time dealing with being attacked, attacked, attacked, sneered, sneered, sneered. And once I called him and I said, "I'm going to this city where a bunch of people want to do a meditation thing and see if the crime rate drops in the city."

And he's like, "Are you kidding?" That you can't control anything there, you're going to get all kinds of random variables. I mean, he almost sneered at me. But his standards of science were impeccable, his experiments are... There's nothing you can fault, and yet he gets sneered at constantly.

Rowan Mangan: Well then I think it's something that comes around a lot in these conversations, is that shaming is a way that the culture likes to keep people in line. And to be sneered at is to be shamed, whether you accept the shame or not.

Martha Beck: Yeah. What's funny about that, it is the energy of the sneer that is traumatizing. Like, people don't have to touch you physically, they don't have to stop inviting you to parties or whatever. But if you feel the sneer, even if they don't say anything, it withers your very soul.

Rowan Mangan: That's so true, and it explains to me suddenly why you can remember things when you can't remember the words that were used. Like you know, two people can go, "Oh yeah, we had that terrible fight, what was that about? I don't know." And it's like, "How could you not know what the fight was about?" And it's because their words have all gone from memory, but the sense, the energy remains.



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Martha Beck: I think it sinks in more deeply. Yeah, I mean, I used to... Very occasionally I would coach couples, and they would talk about being screamed at. And they would be sitting in my office, and maybe they'd get slightly heated, maybe like, "I did not do..." The energy was a scream. And they'd say, "Stop screaming at me." And I would say like, "He's talking very softly if she didn't scream." And they're like, "No, he always screams at me like this." It was very big energy, and they were also hypersensitive to each other's energy, which is a whole different thing. Like if you don't believe energy is real, how could you be hypersensitive to it? So you just end up making your conclusions and thinking that they're observable reality.

Rowan Mangan: Yeah, attributing it to something else, yeah, for sure. I love this idea of the little instrument that the culture can... If this instrument can't measure it, then it doesn't exist. And I really would love you to tell the story about the telescope.

Martha Beck: Oh yeah, what I always say. I read a book about cultures that believe in energies, and it says all around the world people have always had this magical thinking that they could sense each other's presence across space and everything. And the fact that everyone believes it means it's a product of the brain, and it's not real. And I was like, "Wait, every culture says there's a moon in the sky but that's not because their brains are fantasizing a moon in the sky." And then I did a book about shamanism a long time ago, and a lot of the shamans would say things like, "You know, we hear the plants singing, they gave us recipes, I'm communicating with my village across... I just throw my ideas, or whatever."

And those are the kinds of things that our science says, "They don't exist, they don't exist." And the person would say, "Well okay, here's what you have to do. You have to meditate, you have to take a certain plant substance, you have to do these things." And the scientist would say, "We don't have to do that, we know it doesn't exist." And I thought, "What if you said to someone, 'I have discovered that there are rings around Saturn,' and they said, 'No, I see Saturn all the time, it's just a planet, it doesn't have rings.' And you say, 'Yes, but I have a telescope, look through the telescope.' And they would say, 'No, I'm not going to look through your stupid telescope. It's just going to fool me into thinking that what I see with my own eyes isn't reality.'"

Like, the methodologies of understanding energy are very well-developed in many cultures, but our culture will not use the methodologies. And then it totally disconfirms the belief system, because it won't measure in the way that those cultures have learned to measure things. But if you use those technologies, things happen, I guarantee they happen, yeah.



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- Rowan Mangan: Yeah, absolutely. So how do we figure it all out, Marty?
- Martha Beck: Well, we will figure that out in just a minute.
- Rowan Mangan: So as we try to figure this out and we try to get to the bottom of culture, nature, thing, I think my example with the arsenic in the water is like, the nature part of me said, "Something scary is happening." And that part was correct, says, "Feel what you feel and trust it." But the part of me that was culture said, "Figure out with your brain what this means," you know?
- Martha Beck: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.
- Rowan Mangan: And I feel like that's the kind of nature/culture breakdown here, it's as we sort of said before, it's the link between the feeling and then what we... Name the feeling.
- Martha Beck: You know, you make an excellent point because one thing I always try to remember is that when we're scared we're scary. When I'm afraid of someone, I will say always, it's always because there's fear in them. And one of the most common things that happens is that people come braced to be attacked, and so their energy is very spiky and angry, like it's a fight or flight energy. They're feeling terrified, what they come across as is spiky and confrontational and rude. And so the other person then interprets that energy to be, "You're upset with me and I'm going to counter it with my own aggression." And so, two terrified people will say, "I was just innocently going about my way, and he just attacked me out of nowhere."
- "No, you attacked me." So the interpretation of the energy, if you're not... You have to be really careful and impeccable in the way you discern energy and say, "Oh, okay, I will believe that." But if you're in a very extreme state of energy yourself, you'll paint everything with that brush.
- Rowan Mangan: Yeah, you can't really step into that interpretive space during something that intense, right?
- Martha Beck: So if you went back to the playground thing, and if you feel into that sensation, can you feel the difference between a place where everyone is terrified and a place where there's like hostility?
- Rowan Mangan: Yeah, totally.



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Martha Beck: And here's the thing, we can't learn that from culture, our culture says it doesn't even exist. But you're feeling your way through this, and it's like learning to track a different animal, to tell a hyena track from a leopard track or whatever. You're making finer and finer discerning judgments about the feeling of it, and you called them spidey senses. If you acknowledge that this is a real thing and you can do it, then you can get really responsible about learning to interpret it impeccably.

Rowan Mangan: Well, and I wonder if you always need to interpret it. Like, if this is part of our nature that is from way back evolutionarily, in terms of dealing with relationships between people, all right, ra ra ra, we need to interpret. But for my example, I might never have found out what was actually going on in that place that day. And the message would have remained as true, and the message was simply if I had to put words to it, "This is not a good place to be, be elsewhere."

Martha Beck: Mm-hmm, interesting.

Rowan Mangan: And it would have been correct.

Martha Beck: Yes, yes. Here's the thing, I think the language and memory interpretation is what gets us messed up here. Because y'all out there in the world may have heard of Jill Bolte Taylor, the Harvard neuroanatomist who had a massive left hemisphere stroke when she was 37. And she's a friend of mine, and when she lost language and rational calculation, she wrote in her book, "I didn't know what people were saying, I didn't know who they are, I had no idea what a doctor was, or even what a mother was. But boy, could I feel their energy." And she's like, "After I got my language back and my reasoning capacity back, I didn't throw away the baby with the bathwater. I kept that ability to sense energy."

But here was the thing, she felt no fear, and she felt connected to everyone. She felt like she was one with everything, the right hemisphere seems to do that. So she wasn't making any cultural interpretations or any verbal interpretations, she was... And I think because of that she was able to sense things and get their meaning quite accurately. She wasn't spinning anything around it, she was just reacting to what was present in the moment. Like you said, this is not a good place to be, be elsewhere. There's nothing judgmental about that, there's nothing cultural about it. It's a pure, natural energy. And so maybe we could just keep that and go to, "What exactly did I feel in that moment?" Instead of, "He was so mean," or, "She was just pathetic," or you know? Like, "What did you feel in that moment?"

Rowan Mangan: And was there like an action directive there, right?



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- Martha Beck: Mm-hmm.
- Rowan Mangan: Like if Jill didn't know what a mother was but she felt moved towards this person, you know?
- Martha Beck: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm, yes.
- Rowan Mangan: To simplify it, you know? The doctors might have been wanting to study her for whatever and it's like, move away, this isn't... Their intentions aren't good. And so I just wonder if we... Yeah, how much we need to go about this process. Because what we're talking about is moving from the right brain, right hemisphere of the brain like Jill that feels it. And then we feel like we have to move it over to the computer, the left hemisphere.
- Martha Beck: Get rid of all that woo woo stuff. But the whole brain, which is what Jill talks about using, says, "Here is this energy, I'm putting this interpretation. Am I absolutely sure it's true?" So be the scientist, you bring your left brain in but not just to say, "I know what that means." You say, "My brain is telling me what that means. Am I absolutely certain?" So you become a more scrupulous scientist, and you keep the feeling of the energy at the same time.
- Rowan Mangan: Oh, I love that, that's really cool. And I guess because my question that I still have about this is learning how to trust these feelings when they come up, and to make sure that I'm not mistaking a real energetic read for some sort of preconception that I've got in my brain. And I guess what we're sort of edging towards is, it's not about whether energy's real or not, really. It's, is it giving us useful information we can use right now?
- Martha Beck: You know what I think is a really useful thing for me, as we're talking about this? I get a sense, I make an interpretation because I can't not, like my brain-
- Rowan Mangan: Yes, I know.
- Martha Beck: ... is just generating. I have a monkey that bites brutality, don't feed him, don't fight him, even if you fight you cannot win.
- Rowan Mangan: You can't win.



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Martha Beck: So I have my monkey mind going, "I know exactly what that means." And then if I go to you, and this is why it's so interesting to be in a three-person relationship. Because I know exactly what you mean, and exactly what your tone of voice was. And Karen's like, "No." You're like, "No, I really didn't." But you said, and Karen's like, "No, and she really didn't." And then the referee seat shifts depending on who's getting a little anxious, and it's always about anxiety isn't it?

Rowan Mangan: Yeah, it is with us.

Martha Beck: Because that's always been misinterpreted. Yeah, we never go to like, "I'm going to dominate you." We're always like, "Are you mad at me? Please don't be mad at me."

Rowan Mangan: "I thought you were mad at me."

Martha Beck: "Oh, we all thought we were mad at each other all the time." Yeah, so checking with a person who's not really involved in this situation. And I remember one time, I was working with a client who was trying to get out of a bad marriage. And I was sitting with someone else, totally unrelated to the situation. And the person... I started feeling really, really, really strange for some reason, I felt terrified but also sort of mashed down, and my mind was clouded and everything. It felt really toxic and weird, and the person with me said... Was another coach, said, "Your energy just shifted." And then I said, "I know." And we tried to figure out what it was, and then the other person went, "Oh yeah, that's not you. You're getting ick bombed, figure out where you're getting ick bombed." And I went to my email, and this woman's husband, who... She was trying to get out of the marriage. He'd decided I was responsible, and he had turned a violent stream of rage against me. And when the email came in, that's when I started to get all weird and messed up. That really showed me a lot about, "Ooh, yeah, take it seriously."

However, it brings me to another thing, which is, I know when people are against me, they have the evil eye. And that can get really out of hand. And it's a good reason, I mean people went to the sort of empirical, rational way of thinking, because they came from a theocracy where someone could say, "You have violated Christendom, and will be burned as a witch. And how can we tell? We feel it," right?

Rowan Mangan: Mm-hmm.

Martha Beck: So then they went to, "No, if you can't measure it you can't claim it." And having come from a theocracy myself, Utah, I really appreciate that.



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- Rowan Mangan: Yeah, yeah, absolutely.
- Martha Beck: But that's why you have to be a very scrupulous scientist of your own emotional energy.
- Rowan Mangan: Right, and not mistake one for the other. Because culture can masquerade as nature, for those of us who are trying to do this stuff, you know?
- Martha Beck: Say more.
- Rowan Mangan: Well, like paranoia. I could feel, like that story you just told was true and was borne out by the facts. But you know, you could have, "Oh, I'm sure that this person..." You know, it would be so easy to concoct that story, and it starts here. It doesn't start in the gut or wherever this stuff is coming from, you know?
- Martha Beck: You know, what I'm thinking is, it basically... You have to take absolute responsibility for the cleanliness of your own energy. Somebody could be ick bombing you, somebody could be madly in love with you and you not in love with them, so you don't know what to do about it. They can't make you feel afraid. Who was it? It's been attributed to everybody, "Nobody can make you feel inferior without your consent." I've heard it, Eleanor Roosevelt, I don't know who said it, but it's a good point. If you say, "You made me do this thing because I was scared of how you would have reacted if you'd found out," I hear that kind of thing all the time. "I had to tell the lies, because I knew from their energy that if they'd known that I'd done this and that, I would have been in trouble." No, they can't make you change your energy, even if they send you a strong bolt of it.
- Rowan Mangan: Absolutely.
- Martha Beck: You can always get back to calm, you can... Not that I can do it all the time, but I try. Get back to presence, get back to self authority, "I know how to work with my own feelings." Get back to integrity, there's actually... It's a sense of being in a clear place that is actually deeper even than emotion, like the place where I am sure. And that's just presence.





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- Rowan Mangan: Yeah, I mean it's so interesting, the way this conversation has run from, you were talking about the monkey mind in a sort of joking way at the beginning. But what I see coming through here is that this is exactly where the monkey mind can steer us so wrong, and that energy can be a really powerful teacher and director of the decisions we make. But there's no rush, like snap judgment about what it means. And until you can get to the presence, and the space, and the sense of truth that you're talking about, it's a garbled transmission right?
- Martha Beck: It is so funny that this silly thing that I brought in because it was ridiculous is actually turning into my lesson of the year.
- Rowan Mangan: Say it again, Marty.
- Martha Beck: Yes, it is-
- Rowan Mangan: This is our lesson, everyone.
- Martha Beck: Okay, here it is, here it is. "The wild monkey has appeared. The wild monkey bites brutality. Don't feed him and don't fight him, even if you fight you can't win." So the monkey mind said, "I'm afraid, I'm very, very afraid," and there is something deeper that is present. And when a client is going weird I'll say, "Look at the color of the walls, feel yourself in your chair, this is where you are. Can you feel that you're okay now?" As Byron Katie says, "No matter what happens, you always just end up sitting in a chair somewhere." Be sitting in a chair where you are, and when the energy comes don't fight it and don't feed it, especially if it bites brutality.
- Rowan Mangan: Oh God, yeah.
- Martha Beck: Because if you fight the wild monkey you can't win.
- Rowan Mangan: So with that my friends, go sense some energy and stay wild.
- Rowan Mangan: We hope you're enjoying Bewildered. If you're in the USA and want to be notified when a new episode comes out, text the word, WILD, to 570-873-0144. We're also on Instagram. Our handle is @bewilderedpodcast. You can follow us to get updates, hear funny snippets and outtakes, and chat with other fans of the show.

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