

EPISODE 892

“KR: By sucking at surfing, I was able to get over my fear of public humiliation, right? Because when you surf, you are surfing where everyone can see you wipeout and miss waves. I got really used to being okay with that. Then I realized I could apply that to my writing. I started sharing my writing more as I got accustomed to that and thinking, “Well, the worst thing that happens is somebody sees my writing and they don't like it,” right? I mean, I'll be okay with that.”

[INTRODUCTION]

[0:01:05.1]

FT: I don't know about you, but I've I spent a lot of my life trying to not suck at a lot of things. My parents pushed me to do my best. I was always the teacher's pet. I strived for the straight A's. I'm relieved now to have a friend, Karen Rinaldi, who is all about sucking at something. It's not until you suck at something repeatedly that you actually grow. This is eye-opening information and I wanted to bring Karen back on the show, actually. She was already on the podcast a year or so ago for a fiction book that she wrote.

Karen has spent 20 years in publishing. She is the publisher of Harper Wave, which is an imprint that she founded in 2012. She's written novels. She's out with a new book now called *It's Great to Suck at Something: The Unexpected Joy of Wiping Out and What It Can Teach Us About Patience, Resilience and the Stuff that Really Matters*. For Karen, she sucks at surfing. *This has been an incredible journey for her. It's what inspired the book and think about it, what is something that you do in your life that you suck at, but guess what? You love it. It's like this weird relationship. You keep getting up and going at it, even though every time, it's a miserable #fail.*

For me, I'd say that's tennis. I don't suck at stand-up comedy, but it is something that I know it's a constant work in progress. That is really exciting to me and it hasn't for some reason discouraged me. It's actually inspired me and it actually has led me to be better at other things, such as podcasting and thinking on my feet and not having a filter. I'm living this this lesson that

Karen is now teaching as gospel. I want to now share it with you, because I think that it can make us better at a lot of things; our money, our relationships, our career, the list goes on.

Without further ado, here is the wonderful, the masterful Karen Rinaldi.

[INTERVIEW]

[0:03:19.6]

FT: Karen Rinaldi, welcome back to So Money. I have been waiting for this moment. You announced you were going to write this book last time you were on, or alluded to it. Here we are two years later. Congratulations.

[0:03:32.2]

KR: Hi, Farnoosh. It's great. Thank you for having me on again. Yeah, it seemed like a blink, but it was two years ago, wasn't it? Wow, that's crazy.

[0:03:42.6]

FT: The book we're talking about is *It's Great to Suck at Something: The Unexpected Joy of Wiping Out and What It Can Teach Us About Patience, Resilience and the Stuff that Really Matters*. This stemmed from your personal experience as a novice surfer.

[0:04:00.0] KR: Yes, a novice surfer whose status never exceeds the novice level, I'm afraid, after I think we're going on 18 years now of surfing. I have nothing if not persistent, but I'm really bad at it. I'm still bad at it.

[0:04:18.1]

FT: I want to ask all sorts of questions around the how and the why this book – Ultimately, I want to help listeners to identify their thing to suck at well. For you though, what got you back on the

saddle, or the board so often? Then when was it that you realized, “Hey, I’m actually benefiting from this beyond just humility, strengthening the humility muscle?”

[0:04:44.9]

KR: Yes. What got me going back on, that's a really good question, because I think that's the entry point for a lot of people, which is you try something, you're not good at it. What gets you to the next thing? That's why I say that the first rule, or the first thing you have to do is when you choose something, if and when you choose something, and I hope everybody does, to suck at, you choose something that you love, or that you might love. You might have to try a lot of different things.

I mean, I've tried everything. I've tried skiing, horseback riding, rollerblading, cycling, weightlifting, boxing. I mean, I've done so many from a physical point of view. I've loved a lot of them and I have pursued a lot of them for a short while, but none of them stuck like surfing. There are a lot of reasons personally why that's true for me. I think what happened is that it hooked me, right? There's a hook. Also, I started it with the idea that I never had to be good at it.

I knew I was starting way late. It was very late in life at 40-years-old. Not recommended by anybody. Any surfer would say, “Don't bother.” It's such a high learning curve that from the very beginning, it was an act of folly. I think that allowed me to just do it, try it and not worry about if I ever succeeded. Then what happened is I did stand up on a wave that first time. I mean, it was an ankle high wave. I was surfing on what was essentially a barn door. I mean, you could have stood on your head on that board and you would have stood up, because it was so stable.

I got a feeling. That feeling was, “Oh, this could be amazing.” I guess, there was a fuel, what I call the fuel of delusion. The fuel of delusion was, “All right, I'm going to try this and I'm going to get better at it.” The fact of the matter is it took me five years to even catch a wave.

[0:06:47.8]

FT: Wow.

[0:06:48.6]

KR: What kept me going back was a belief and a delusion, but also just the act and this is the most important part, the act of getting a board, putting my board in the ocean, getting in the ocean, paddling out, that was – I made that enough. That became enough and I thought, this is the one thing in my life, that one thing I do that I don't have to be good at. There were so much freedom in that, that I kept doing it and I kept doing it.

[0:07:21.3]

FT: If you perfect this, should you move on to something else that you suck? Is the goal to continue sucking, or do you actually want to perfect it, or get better at it?

[0:07:32.3]

KR: It's interesting, because this is a question that comes up a lot in one guys or another. I understand the tension and this idea. The idea is that listen, if you do something, if you start something new. This is to propel you into something new without fear, without fear of failing and without having a necessary goal, that's the premise of this idea of sucking at something.

However, when you do something with intention and you do it a lot, you're going to get better at it. You just will. Listen, I can surf. I paddle out. I can catch waves. I ride the face of a wave. I can kick out. It's awesome when it happens. I'm not good at it. It's not pretty, but I can do it. By the way, I couldn't do it in the beginning. It took me a really long time to learn. The idea is that yeah, if you do something, if you're going to do pottery, a lot of the clay is going to wind up on the floor and your pot – you're going to make crap pottery and all that stuff. Every once in a while, you're going to craft something that's beautiful.

The idea is to not get hung up on that goal, to not get hung up on the reward, because so much of our life is about that reward and the goal setting. We start out with a certain level of anxiety and stress. I'm saying, let go of that anxiety and stress and that myth, or that lie of perfection, right? Let go of that and do it anyway.

In the book, I tell the story of one of the greatest ballet dancers of all time, Mikhail Baryshnikov. When I met him, I was working with him on a book as a publisher. When I met him, it was this amazing moment and I won't – the story in the book goes into detail and it's actually a pretty funny story. One of the things I asked was like, "What are you doing after our meeting?" This is Mikhail Baryshnikov, and he said, "I'm going to dance lessons." I thought –

[0:09:21.4]

FT: Lessons.

[0:09:22.4]

KR: The greatest dancer in the world is going to dance lessons. He goes, "Oh, yeah." He goes, "I never stop learning. I never stopped taking lessons." It's really a frame of mind. That idea that perfecting it is like, what is that? I don't think, I want to bust the myth, sorry, of perfectionism. Because I don't believe that perfectionism actually exists. I think it's a lie. It's a lie that captures a lot of us. It drives our egos to the point where we're immobile and we're afraid to try something new.

Listen, I do a lot of things well. I mean, I suck at surfing, but there are things in my life that I do quite well. I don't do any of them perfectly. I mean, I don't know about you, but I would never say that there's anything I do that is perfect. For me to say I'm such a perfectionist, which is a line we all hear all the time is really just a protection against the future failing. That's sad to me, you know what I mean? Why would you put up that roadblock to yourself? "I'm such a perfectionist that dot, dot, dot. I can't finish this. I can't start that. I'm afraid to perform. I'm afraid to do this." You do stand-up, right? The first time you do stand-up, you had to let go of that notion of that lie of perfectionism, because it doesn't exist actually.

[0:10:46.4]

FT: I feel really it dovetails what we're hearing more and more of now from people like Dr. Brene Brown, who is like, lean into your vulnerability. This book is very timely, right? It's not just because we have this fixation on perfectionism, but because also there is a lot of data and

science and psychology behind the rewards of being your weakest self sometimes, or what we perceive to be weakness, but it's actually strength, because if you allow yourself to get vulnerable, that's being strong.

[0:11:16.3]

KR: Exactly. I think that's the big jiu-jitsu move, right? Which is we think all these things are signs of weakness, right? Failure, trying over and over again, reiterating, not giving up. Underneath all of that, underneath the “sucking at something,” you find that there's so much resilience that you have. There's patience that you have. Kristin Neff talks about self-compassion. Brené Brown talks about vulnerability. The Buddhists talk about letting go of a preconceived outcome, right?

There's wisdom in all the mystical traditions and a lot of theology. What's happening is that that wisdom is now being backed by neuroscience and sociological studies and these progressive thinkers in the space of psychology and where the brain and the mind meet. There's a lot of research. I also think, I don't think it's a mistake that right now, we're hearing it because I think we've got to a place in our culture where there's – I call it aspirational dread.

We're taught to be aspirational in everything we do, so that we don't appreciate how hard so many things really are to do. Therefore, we do two things. What we do is we think it's – we don't appreciate how hard it is. We just think that people who are good at things got there, because they were lucky, or because they were innately talented. We don't see underneath it is all of the hard work. I think it's time to pull the cover off of that and notice the hard work, A. B, I feel we are living in a time where social media makes it look like everybody else's life is so much prettier, better, smarter, richer, more successful than ours, because what we do is we curate what goes out in the world, we curate ourselves. All of a sudden, everybody has access to it.

Instead of saying, “I want to show – I hope that I can create a thing where everybody talks about what they suck at.” By the way, you can't talk about what other people suck at, because the whole point of this is to look at yourself and laugh at yourself and appreciate your efforts. Then you can go and appreciate other people's efforts without pointing the finger and saying, “Hey yeah, look at that person. He or she sucks at that.” It's not about judgment, it's about self-

compassion, and then you take that self-compassion and you can turn it outward and appreciate everybody else's efforts as well.

[0:14:01.9]

FT: I like the notion of appreciating the difficulty in things. I like that a lot. It does sound like this to some extent, has to be an exercise of finding something that is physical in nature, an active thing; cycling, riding. Can be sucking at relationships?

[0:14:21.7]

KR: Yeah. Well, you know what? This is what – Okay, so this dovetails actually really well into the benefit of this thing, because what – Does it have to be physical? No. I know somebody who does crossword puzzles, somebody could do knitting, somebody could do – I don't know if it has to be –

[0:14:39.9]

FT: Parenting.

[0:14:41.2]

KR: Writing. I mean, writing is every writer sucks at writing. Because if you don't suck at writing, you're never going to get to the good stuff. Nobody sits down and writes an essay, a book, an article, a novel, or any of it without writing crap first, right? Writers have to just – you don't have to get published, you know what I mean? I wrote for 30-something years without getting published. It was that thing of just, I'm going to write it and put it away, write it and put it away, write it and put it away. Instead of writing to publish, I wrote because I wanted to write and because it gave me pleasure.

I sucked at it. I did. I mean, I really did. It took me a long time to hone that skill. Even though I'm in the world and I have access to all great writers and great information, it didn't matter. I felt I

wasn't ready. I feel it doesn't have to be something physical. I feel it could be languages. I know people who study languages and aren't good at it, but they love to study. [inaudible 0:15:36.5].

It could be more of a cerebral pursuit as well. The idea is to start something you love, that you get a kick out of, that you don't pressure yourself to succeed in. You learn something about yourself by the resilience it takes to go forward and by enjoying the process, so much of this it's the old, old adage of it's about the journey. It's not about the destination. I mean, it's so old school, but that's really partly what this is about.

What happens is that when you suck at something and you learn the tools to forgive yourself, to dig deep for that, the tenacity and grit that you – Angela Duckworth talks about grit. The people talk about a lot of aspects of this. When you have access to that stuff, when you suck at relationships or parenting and God knows, these are the things that's – your partnering, your partnership and relationships, your parenting and work, right? Those are the things you're not really supposed to suck at, right?

[0:16:37.7]

FT: Your money, I must say.

[0:16:39.8]

KR: Well, money is huge actually. Money is really huge about that, because money's hard because there's a lot of emotional stuff attached to money. That self-worth, access to it and people are really messed up about money. I think that what happens is that you have to look at these things somewhat dispassionately. Not that you're dispassionate about money, work, parenting or partnering, but allowing yourself to fail in it, because listen, we were talking about parenting before we started recording and you said, "You're a great mother." It's like, "I don't know. I mean, I hope I am." It's the thing I care about being best at, but I can mark and there are some anecdotes in the book, where I'm not modeling the best for my kids.

There are times that I screw that up too. The idea is when you exercise that muscle of forgiving yourself and understanding how you can suck at something, or mess up, when you do that

where it really matters in your work and your relationship and with your kids, you can catch yourself and forgive yourself without going way out of control and doing that loop that you do, you say, “I’m worthless and I’m horrible and I did the wrong thing and maybe I’m a bad mother.” It’s like, no, you had a moment that was less than stellar. You go, “Yeah, but I know what that feels like and I still love myself and I am still worthy of love.”

You catch it and you say, “What can I learn from this?” As opposed to going into a tailspin, which is what I think a lot of us do when we mess up. I think it gives you the tools to deal with suckatude for the things that really matter.

[0:18:25.8]

FT: This question comes from our sponsor Chase, Karen. We want to ask people, because this is graduation season and a lot of young people entering the real world for the first time. What is a piece of advice you wish you’d given yourself, or you had had back then? Maybe perhaps some financial advice.

[0:18:46.6]

KR: Wow. Financial advice from what? From back when I started working?

[0:18:51.6]

FT: Yeah, when you first – you graduated from college. If there are any young people listening, they would benefit from this.

[0:19:02.0]

KR: Two things from very polar opposite sides of it. One is don’t chase the money, because if you pick the thing you want to do, and this is where it’s not – you can’t suck at something. Do it and put your head down and be really good at it. The money will come. I was told this when I was young and I was very frustrated when I started out in publishing, which is a notoriously low-paying industry. I thought, “Oh, boy.”

I remember getting advice from someone and said, “Just put your head down and keep at it and be really good at it and you will catch up to the point where you will make, you will do – I mean, not – you don't get rich doing it, but you will do decently.” A lot of it is not – don't quit the job to take the next little increase, to take the next little increase. Stick. I think sticking is hugely important and be good and the money will come. Then on the opposite side of it is definitely take – if you're in a company and someone's offering it, take advantage of that 401K. I just did –

[0:20:11.3]

FT: Let's just get tactical for a second here, okay everybody?

[0:20:14.6]

KR: You just go away, get really simple about it. I did not listen. I didn't do it until it's way too late in the game and I'm kicking myself.

[0:20:24.3]

FT: The Wall Street Journal highlighted your book as part of a genre of new books that are written, seems to be in service of women in their 50s, perhaps because the authors are in that demo and midlife. I feel your book is applicable – I mean, most important, to people who are young too, because better to fail at something when you're younger and strengthen your ability to deal with adversity and all the things that fall into that category of subjection, etc., earlier than later. For some reason, there's a sweet spot here for people in midlife. I just want to talk about maybe how people in different generations can embrace this.

[0:21:02.6]

KR: Well, that's been interesting is that I've seen people want to apply the application of this idea of sucking at something. I've been tapped by Parents Magazine, because they want to talk about not only parenting, but how it helps us with our kids. Women, I've been tapped by a couple of people to talk about how women – what women can learn, because we often judge

ourselves harshly and are judged harshly. Writing. I've written about writing and sucking and finding a work/life balance.

I'm finding application to every demographic and also every sector, right? Even in education. I think our kids, either our kids or we say we are in the middle of our education, if it's college, or grad school, or more, and we're constantly – We don't allow ourselves, or our kids to fail at school, or to do badly. We think, we've got them so focused on the win. Listen, not everybody can be the best. Not everybody's going to win all the time.

Really what you want to teach is that resilience and – Andrew Zolli, who wrote a book called *Resilience*, and he and I had this amazing conversation that's actually in the book and he talks about when things go wrong, right? When a situation goes wrong, it could be a structure breaks, a resilient structure, or a resilient person breaks because there are things in place that there's flexibility and there's improvisation, right? If a person is in a situation where things go whack, right? Because they always do, the person who is not going to break from rigidity is going to be more flexible and is also going to be able to improvise on that situation to make it better.

When you do something you're not entirely expert at, right? You don't have that expert loop going, but you have to be constantly adjusting. That's where you learn to improvise. It's more jazz, than it is a baroque symphony, right? You know what I mean? Instead of it being rigid and set, it's improvisational.

I feel this is a lesson that everybody can learn at every point in your life. I feel The Wall Street Journal piece, which was amazing and got a lot of attention I think is that these women over 50 saying, “You don't get to be 50 and then you can't try new things.” You don't go forward and try new stuff because it's like, “Oh, I mean, the line would be – Oh, I'm too old to do X, Y or Z.” The point is A, you're never too old to do X, Y, or Z. You're also never too – as you're never too busy, or never too – There's always excuses that we give ourselves. I'm saying get rid of the excuses and make room for play for something new. Like I said, we all benefit from it.

[0:24:04.7]

FT: I think Nora Ephron was in her late 40s or something like that before she got really famous and did her first –

[0:24:11.3]

KR: Oh, is that true? Yeah, I don't remember when that happened.

[0:24:14.4]

FT: Someone.

[0:24:15.5]

KR: Yeah. Yeah, that makes sense.

[0:24:17.2]

FT: Maybe. Don't quote me on that.

[0:24:18.9]

KR: Well, if it's not her, it's somebody else. I mean, listen, I think a lot of people measure themselves against other people's successes. A, that equation doesn't really have any meaning, A. B, you can't measure yourself against somebody's successes, because you don't also know what their failures were, right? You can't know that, so you're not getting the whole story. We selectively look at things and say, "Oh, I wish I could do that, be that, have that," as opposed to saying, "Well, wait a minute. What's right for me?" Then letting go of that comparison, because the comparison is basically – it's a false set of factors, contributing to whatever comparison you're making, because you can't possibly know what the whole story is.

[0:25:09.3]

FT: I'd love to link this a little bit, this concept of sucking at something and how it can therefore, directly or indirectly help you with a project at work, or your relationships, or just – I don't know, something tangible. For the sake of that, can you give us a story of maybe how you're surfing the introspection that happened as a result of sucking at it, the self-actualization, all that. How did that maybe manifest in something really important in your life?

[0:25:41.0]

KR: I mean, and then I can answer that in a couple of ways. The most obvious way is that I was talking about writing before and how writing – so I'm an editor, I'm a publisher and I've written my whole life, right? I've been writing since I was 11-years-old. I'm a tough judge of writing, because it's what I do for a living. I know what good writing is. I am tasked with helping writers find their voice and put their work together and to get it out in the world.

I was very hesitant to let my own work out into the world as a writer, even though I've been writing for decades. It really ties back to surfing. This is crazy. Surfing helped me be a writer professionally. I mean, to now and be a published writer. By sucking at surfing, I was able to get over my fear of public humiliation, right? Because when you surf, you are surfing where everyone can see you wiped out and miss waves. I got really used to being okay with that.

Then I realized that I could apply that to my writing. I started sharing my writing more as I got accustomed to that and thinking, "Well, the worst thing that happens is somebody sees my writing and they don't like it," right? I'll be okay with that. That helped me push through a barrier that I had and a fear of humiliation that I had.

I don't surf better, but I definitely was able to share my work, which of course, when I share my work with people, they were able to help me make it better and I was able to make it better without that fear of failure, or that, "Oh, it's already not perfect and I'm so embarrassed by that." That was a huge permission for me to go from being a writer who wrote a loan and kept it quiet, to a writer who was able to share her work.

[0:27:38.2]

FT: I love it. Suck at something, so you can excel at something else. That's more important to you, perhaps.

[0:27:44.6]

KR: It's not the writing. It's not more important to me than surfing. That's actually not true. If I could do anything, I would surf first, then I would do everything else second. I mean, that's a crazy calculus, but I have to work and I love my work and I love to write and I have to write. I can't surf all the time. I don't get paid for it and it's not – What I do is it not only gives me the pleasure in doing it, but this is why you said, why did you keep going?

I kept going, because I kept thinking, “Why am I doing this?” I'm thinking, “I am getting so much out of this, learning so much about myself that I didn't know.” That was very powerful. When I started applying that to the things that – it's like, “Well, what else am I afraid of?” It's like, “I am really afraid of sharing my writing.” I opine about writing for my day job and I did the same for my own and I was so critical. I was like, “I can't let this out of the daylight until it's perfect.”

Nobody writes perfectly. Everybody needs an editor and needs help, right? I was able to share that. Again, that got me to a better place. I think that also makes me better when I screw up at work. Again, it doesn't make me better at work, it makes me better at understanding where I'm maybe making a mistake and I can do a course correction. As opposed to saying, I'm just a terrible X, Y or Z. That noise, that self-critic in our head is very loud and we want to quiet that self-critic. We can do it by looking it in the face every – I look it in the face every time I surf and I go, “Oh, yeah? Yeah. You think I suck at this? Well, that's fine with me. I'm going to have fun anyway.” There's so much power in that.

[0:29:26.5]

FT: A friend wrote to me the other day. I love this friend of mine, because she's always so positive and she said something like, courage is the currency of life, or the currency of a great life, or something like that. I think, I don't know. Sometimes you just need to hear that stuff.

[0:29:45.2]

KR: Yeah, you do. You have to remind yourself that so what happens when I miss wave? I wipe out. What happens when I get a piece rejected, or a book rejected? Somebody doesn't want to publish it, just probably because it wasn't good enough. You know what? By the way, that's – I have to just – then dot, dot, dot, dot, dot. What does that mean? I'm still worthy of love. You know what I mean? That's where we go, like we had that –

[0:30:13.7]

FT: It's just one person's opinion in that case.

[0:30:16.7]

KR: Well, you know what? My first novel got rejected by 30 people. 30 people rejected my –

[0:30:25.1]

FT: All you need is one person to like it.

[0:30:27.7]

KR: You know what? I put it in the drawer and I just gave up on it for 15 years. Then I pulled it out again. It wound up coming out. The first iterations of it – and I know that. I also know that if it were really good, people would be clamoring for it, right? It's okay. My point was okay, so there, that happened. You know what? I still got up and I still wrote again, just like I still surfed again, I still wrote again.

I think that's the point it's like, if there's something that you must do that you want to do that gives you pleasure anyway, you have to ask yourself why you're doing it. I always say to writers, if you want to write to get published, right? If your first order is getting published, I say don't even start. If your first order of surfing is so that you can surf pipeline, which is a wave that very few people in the world can surf, relatively speaking, if that's your – then don't start.

Don't set the goal before you actually go through the process, because spin it, all the noise in your head will get in the way and actually prevent you from progressing in any measurable, or important way.

[0:31:42.8]

FT: Right. I think, we all do that. I mean, especially people who are in their 20s and 30s when they're just after that success achievement, all the things. Then they get there and they're like, "That's it. Okay. Why am I feeling so crappy?" It's because you didn't enjoy the process. You were just doing it to get that notch on your belt.

[0:32:05.2]

KR: Yeah. I think once you get the notch in your belt, you are faced with I'm still me, I'm still here and that didn't change who I am. Really, what you're trying to get to is just being happy, to just be, to simply be and full stop. That's hard for us, because we want to be, because we want the accolades and the money and the reward and everything else. You're saying, it's very hard to just get to I just want to be. You have to be careful about what it is the reason you're doing something and making sure that you're not saying, "Once I get that, I will be worthy of love. Once I do that, I will be have contributed to the world."

It's like, we have these goals and that's our ego screaming, right, all the time. It's our ego screaming at us and going, "I feel you can be your best self. You can be happy." I don't even know what happy is, but you can be fulfilled. You can be useful to your fellow humans, which is also something that's important, right? We need to be able to help our fellow. We can do that if we get our egos and our need for validation out of the way, right? That's hard. Oh, my God. That's hard.

[0:33:22.7]

FT: That's a life's journey.

[0:33:24.1]

KR: It is. First of all, you're right. It's a life journey, so you're never going to get to the end of it.

[0:33:29.9]

FT: Sorry guys.

[0:33:31.1]

KR: Is it still going out? Yeah, sorry guys, but –

[0:33:33.7]

FT: No, no, no. I meant like, sorry everybody.

[0:33:35.9]

KR: Yeah. That's okay, because the process, the process of it is a beautiful thing. Here's the other thing, to answer the question in one other way. I think this is a beautiful part of it. By entering a new thing, right? A new activity, sport, hobby, whatever you want to call it, you enter another community and it's a community you might not otherwise be part of, right? I'm in the world – I live in New York City. I'm in publishing. I'm in that media art world and I love it.

The world of surfing is sometimes it overlaps and it definitely overlaps a little bit. I have a whole community of people that I know and love who are family to me, that are part of my life, because I surf. It's a surfing community that I would never have known these people who enhanced and enriched my life by the very fact of their being. I mean, I love them. We share this common language. That's not a language that overlaps much with my life. Again, it does overlap in New York a little bit.

You open yourself up to all of – to another community. Connecting with people, I don't know about you, but to me, connecting with people is where I get the most juice. I mean, people are awesome and you get – we fall to these echo chambers, right? Of our own little world. Then

when you pivot out you say, "I'm going to learn glassblowing say, or my son, my younger son is a HEMA expert, so he's in the world of HEMA, which is called Historical European Martial Art. He fights with a German longsword. It's a very esoteric, talk about an amazing community of people from all walk; young, old, male, female, but eccentric, esoteric and brilliant and cerebral and it's the most awesome practice and he's a swordsman, basically. He is a swordsman, practices a 15th century discipline." This is so crazy.

There's this whole world that he's part of, a community that he would never be part of if he didn't – he hadn't been doing it for 12 years and sucked at some of it big times and then had to work through that. Now he's actually quite good. In the early days, he was a very bad fencer actually. He hated fencing and he was a bad fencer. He got good when he finally locked in to HEMA, which was about year eight, or nine down the line. Now this is a part of his universe. By the way, I know the HEMA people, because of him. I get to be part of that community, which I think is awesome. How would you do that if you didn't try something new and struggle in it?

[0:36:24.5]

FT: I think that's the ultimate gift is that connection, that community, especially now we have such a lack of it. It's very easy maybe I should say to feel isolated, because of social media and the technology that we surround ourselves with. So many gifts. So much bounty. Thank you so much Karen.

[0:36:44.1]

KR: Thank you, Farnoosh. Thank you. It's so good to talk to you always.

[END]