

[Transcript] Founders / #299 A new book on Steve Jobs! Make Something Wonderful: Steve Jobs in his own words

In this episode that you're about to listen to, you're going to hear Steve Jobs start and then sell two other businesses before going back to Apple and focusing solely on his life's work.

This is something that you and I have talked about a lot before. As entrepreneurs, it is highly likely that we're going to start more than one business before we find our life's work.

In fact, this is so common that today's sponsor Tiny has created a business that buys other businesses.

Tiny is the easiest way for you to sell your business. They provide straightforward cash exits for founders and they can do deals of all sizes.

They bought businesses in the past for as little as a million dollars and they bought businesses for over a hundred million dollars.

Selling a business, as anybody knows, is usually a headache and a hassle. Selling to Tiny is the opposite.

The process of selling your business is very straightforward. You get in touch with Tiny by emailing them.

You email them at high at tiny.com. You'll get a response within 48 hours. They'll make an offer within seven days and they close within a month and you get a bag full of cash.

If you have a business that you want to sell now or in the future, make sure you go to tiny.com.

In this episode is also brought to you by Meter. Meter is the easiest way for your business to get fast, secure and reliable internet and Wi-Fi in any commercial space.

It doesn't matter if it's an office, a warehouse, a laboratory. Meter does it all.

One of my favorite things about Meter is how easy they make it for the customer, which obviously you and I have been obsessed with

and what they share with a lot of history's greatest entrepreneurs that we study on this podcast.

What does that mean? That means all you have to do is give Meter your address and the square footage of your commercial space

and they take care of the rest even better. There's no upfront cost to you and you only have to deal with Meter.

You only have to deal with one company. Compare that to how it used to be when you had to set up Wi-Fi and internet in a commercial space.

You had to deal with a ton of different vendors. You had to deal with networking hardware companies, network and security management, IT support,

and then internet service providers. Meter solves and simplifies all that complexity.

Meter makes fast, secure and reliable internet and Wi-Fi that's as easy to switch on as water or electricity.

That is actually why the company is called Meter. There's power meters and there's water meters for every building.

There should be one for internet networking and Wi-Fi.

As a business owner, you're going to love Meter because it saves you money.

While your IT team will love Meter because it saves them time.

And Meter grows right along with your business.

So that means you can expand your business without worrying about expensive upfront costs.

You simply pay one monthly rate. Don't forget how easy it is to get set up with Meter.

All you have to do is give them your address and your square footage and they will take care of the

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rest at no upfront cost to you.

To learn more, visit Meter.com forward slash founders.

And one more interesting fact before we jump into this episode, the word passion appears 10 times in this new book on Steve Jobs.

Passion is extremely important to me and how I approach my own work.

In fact, when I was a guest on the Invest Like The Best podcast, the name of that episode is Passion and Pain.

I'll leave a link down below, but please search whatever podcast player you're listening to this in and search for Invest Like The Best.

Follow that show and then listen to episode 293, David Sandra, Passion and Pain.

The best way to understand a person is to listen to that person directly.

And the best way to understand Steve is to listen to what he said and wrote over the course of his life.

His words in speeches, interviews and emails offer a window into how he thought and he was an exquisite thinker.

Much of what's in these pages reflects guiding themes of Steve's life.

His sense of the worlds that would emerge from marrying the arts and technology.

His unbelievable rigor, which he imposed first and most strenuously on himself.

His tenacity in pursuit of assembling and leading great teams.

And perhaps above all, his insights into what it meant to be human.

Steve once told a group of students, you appear, have a chance to blaze in the sky and then you disappear.

He gave an extraordinary amount of thought to how best to use our fleeting time.

He was compelled by the notion of being part of the arc of human existence.

Animated by the thought that he and that any of us might elevate our expedite human progress.

It is hard to see what is already there to gain a clear view.

Steve's gift was greater still.

He saw clearly what was not there, what could be there, what had to be there.

His mind was never a captive of reality, quite the contrary.

He imagined what reality lacked and set out to remedy it.

His ideas were not arguments, but intuitions, born of a true inner freedom and an epic sense of possibility.

In these pages, Steve drafts and refines.

He stumbles, grows and changes, but always, always, he retains that sense of possibility.

I hope these selections ignite in you the understanding that drove him, that everything, that everything that makes up what we call life,

was made by people no smarter and no more capable than we are, that our world is not fixed and so we can change it for the better.

That was the introduction written by Steve's wife, Lorraine Powell Jobs, of the book that I'm going to talk to you about today, which is available for free.

The Steve Jobs archive put this book available for free.

You can read it online at their website for free.

I'll link all this down below.

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You can read it on Apple Books or you can download the file and send it to your Kindle, which is what I did.

It is make something wonderful Steve Jobs in his own words.

And so I'm going to go back through that introduction because I took a bunch of notes.

One, I think it's one of the most beautifully written introductions that I've read.

And not only that, it hit you, if you think about it, that was her husband, the father of her children, somebody she was building her life with.

And to have him gone so early and such an exquisite person so early, it's just absolutely devastating when you think about it.

And so I thought her introduction was really touching.

I thought there was a lot of ideas that are tied into that.

But what was interesting is the book actually starts out right before the introduction.

There's a quote from Steve in 2007.

I'm going to read this whole thing to you.

And a lot of this, what I love about this book, and I'm so glad they put this together.

And then not only they put it together, but anybody can read it for free all over the world.

That's just absolutely incredible.

It really is like a gift to the next generation of entrepreneurs is the fact that a lot of this is just Steve in his own words.

And so it's like Steve Jobs speaking directly to you.

And so it's already obvious that this is going to be a book I'm going to reference and read over and over again through my life.

So here's Steve in 2007.

There's a lot of ways to be as a person.

And some people express their deep appreciation in different ways.

But one of the ways that I believe people express their appreciation to the rest of humanity is to make something wonderful and put it out there.

And you never meet the people.

You never shake their hands.

You never hear their story or tell yours.

But somehow in the act of making something with a great deal of care and love, something's transmitted there.

And it is a way of expressing to the rest of our species our deep appreciation.

So we need to be true to who we are and remember what's really important to us.

And so this idea, it's the act of making something with a great deal of care and love.

And so in addition to reading this book, I went back through and deep into the Steve Jobs rabbit hole.

There's this interview of him that was lost and then found after he died.

And it was an interview given about a year before he came back to Apple.

It's called Steve Jobs The Lost Interview.

I have never found it anywhere else except on YouTube.

And you have to buy it.

So I think I paid like 10 or 15 bucks for this or something.

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But it's just Steve Unfilter talking for, I don't know, an hour and 20 minutes.
I'll leave the link in case you want to buy it.
But I also took a bunch of notes on it and you can read through my notes as well.
And so there's something he says in the interview that is very similar.
And that interview was given about 11 years, 12 years before he, this quote, where he's like, it's the act of making something with a great deal of care and love.
So that is Steve's implicit advice to you and I, right?
Actually care.
Do you actually care about what you're putting out to the world?
And if you do, it'll show.
Are you just doing it just to make money?
And what I love about Steve is no one's ever going to say that this guy was motivated by money, right?
There's no reading of his career where that's possible.
And obviously became incredibly wealthy, but it's the idea of, hey, I'm going to make something people, make something that people love, something that's wonderful.
And you'll see how much I care for the product that I make.
And so in that talk, the opposite of this is something Steve hated.
Steve hated where there was like no spirit, no taste, no humanity in the products.
And so he was talking about in 1996.
He said, listen, Microsoft, you have to admire what they built.
You know, they're, they're extremely aggressive.
He's like, they just keep coming.
They're great opportunists.
And he said in the interviews, like that's not an insult, but he goes, I have no problem with their success.
I have a problem that they make really third rate products.
Their products have no spirit to them.
They are very pedestrian.
They are McDonald's.
That's the quote from Steve Jobs.
And I'm glad I re-listened to that after I had read this because I'm like, oh, it's the exact same idea.
He's just saying the opposite.
Make something with a great deal of care and love.
From the product that you're making to the company that you're building, it'll be obvious if you actually care.
I think that's the advice that Steve would give us.
So let's go back to the introduction written by his wife.
I just want to pull out a couple of things when I was reading this that popped my mind.
So one of the, one of the lines that she says is much of what's in these pages reflect guiding themes of Steve's life.
His sense of the worlds that would emerge from marrying the arts and technology.

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So the reason this is so important to you and I and something you and I have discussed over and over again is there's ideas are extremely powerful, right?

Your mind is a powerful place, which you feed it affects you in a powerful way.

And there's an idea that one idea Steve learned when he was in his early 20s.

The idea is that you should build a company at the intersection of arts and technology.

That is Edwin Land's idea.

That is an idea that Steve Jobs learned from Edwin Land that Steve used when he was in his 20s, his 30s, his 40s.

Until he died. And the reason I want to resurface that is because if Steve was here today, he would tell you to study Edwin Land.

That's why I repeat it so much.

I actually heard this hilarious tweet the other day where somebody said that a lot of people's alarm clocks are David Goggins telling them to get after it.

And mine is David Senra yelling at me to be more like Edwin Land.

So I thought that was hilarious. And that's not even my idea.

It's just an idea I learned from Steve because Steve was so effusive in his praise of Edwin Land to the point where he built a company.

Say, hey, that's a really good idea. Let me take that idea that Edwin Land used for Polaroid and I'm going to use it for Apple.

And then as obviously ideas are immortal.

So Edwin Land passed away. Steve Jobs carried that torch.

And then now we're going to hopefully preach that lesson to people and that that idea will outlive and outlast both you and I.

So go back to another thing that she said, his unbelievable rigor, which he imposed first and most strenuously on himself.

That made me think of a quote that I read from Steve.

It's one of my favorite ones. I don't think it's in this book.

He was unapologetically extreme in the sense that, hey, the work has to come first.

And so he says, be a yardstick of quality.

Some people aren't used to an environment where excellence is expected.

And that only works if you can't lead other people to do that unless you impose that strict, like, high quality standards on yourself.

So she says his unbelievable rigor, which he imposed first and most strenuously on himself.

Steve is not alone with other high performers and extreme winners that do this.

I was listening to this interview.

That line made me think of this interview with Kobe Bryant that I save and I watch all the time.

And it's something I try to adapt to my own life where he's being interviewed by Kobe Bryant, is being interviewed by Ahmad Rashad and they're reflecting on this very difficult part of Kobe's career.

And Ahmad's like, you know, how did you deal with all this?

Like this external pressure.

And he goes, but the pressures.

This is Ahmad Rashad asking Kobe's like, but the pressures from fans expecting Kobe to and then

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Kobe immediately.
First of all, he makes a stanky face like he smelled something bad.
He's like, oh, he immediately interrupts Ahmad.
And this is what Kobe says.
Their expectations will never be higher than my own.
Never, never, never, never, never.
He says never.
That's not exaggeration.
He says never like 10 times.
And I think that's the exact right to weight approach your work.
There's nobody in the world that held Steve Jobs to a higher standard than Steve Jobs did.
There's nobody that held is nobody should be capable of holding you a higher standard than you are.
There's nobody, like you said, but the pressures from fans expecting you to be and Kobe's like, no, their expectations will never be higher than my own.
Never, never, never, never, never saying it over and over again.
Only when you impose such strict standards on yourself can then you impose them on others.
And it's unlikely there's anybody else that knew Steve Jobs as well as his wife did.
And she says his unbelievable rigor, which he imposed most first and most strenuously on himself.
And then she references this line that he said, I'm pretty sure he says it to a group of graduating high school seniors at Palo Alto high school.
If I remember this correctly, this is the full quote, quote, though, this is so important.
This is a quote I think I'll remember for the rest of my life.
And this is if I've never come across, you know, I've done, I don't know, 10 podcasts on Steve.
I've read every single book I could find on them, many of them multiple, multiple times.
And I don't think I've ever come across this. This is excellent.
And he says, think of your life as a rainbow arcing across the horizon of this world.
You appear, have a chance to blaze in the sky, and then you disappear.
And then another line that she said that made me think of something else.
He gave an extraordinary amount of thought to how best to use our fleeting time.
I wrote, Steve was intolerant of slowness.
This is a theme that has been reappearing over and over again on the podcast.
And then when she wrote, his mind was never a captive of reality, quite the contrary.
He imagined what reality lacked and set out to remedy it.
His ideas were not arguments, but intuitions born of a true inner freedom and an epic sense of possibility.
That last line is so important, an epic sense of possibility.
When I got to that part, it made me think of D-Hawk, the founder of Visa.
He just passed away a few months ago.
And I think if he was alive, he would give us this advice.
It's advice that's in his autobiography and a lot of his writing,
that you need to design your product, not for how things are, but how they ought to be.
That's such a simple ought to be.
Three words, design your product for how things ought to be.

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And I think Steve would agree with that as well.

And then finally, the last paragraph of the introduction where she's saying in these pages, Steve drafts and refines, he stumbles, grows and changes.

That is why you need to be reading biographies as many of them as you possibly can, because everybody's focused on the outcome where when you're reading, you see them stumble. They're editing, they're growing, they're changing.

And then she wraps up with this, you know, one of the most important things they've ever said, that everything around you, everything that makes up life was made by other people and that you can do that, that the world is not fixed and you can change it for the better.

This is one of my all-time favorite quotes that comes from Mark Andreessen.

The world is a very malleable place.

If you know what you want, you go for it with maximum energy and drive and passion.

The world will often reconfigure itself around you much more quickly and easily than you would think.

Okay, so now the book begins.

You got to download the book just for the pictures.

Like, I think I'm going to have the pictures printed out and framed.

They're just absolutely excellent, especially the pictures of young Steve.

But it's separated into three parts, goes in chronological order, usually about a decade of his career.

And so Leslie Berlin is writing here.

She goes, Steve typically kept his personal life private,

but he did occasionally talk about growing up in the San Francisco Bay area.

And so then this is why this book is so valuable.

It's going to remind you if you bought Invent and Wander, the collected writings of Jeff Bezos, which I think are excellent, because the first half of that book is all of Jeff Bezos's shareholder letters.

Which I've read, I don't know, three times.

I think I've done two podcasts on it, two or three podcasts on it.

I'll do more in the future as well.

But then a collected edited transcripts of his important speeches.

So that book, you pick it up.

It's like Jeff Bezos speaking directly to you.

This book is, hey, Steve Jobs speaking directly to you.

And a lot of this is spread over multiple decades.

So I'm going to read you from, he's giving this talk in 1995.

And he's recording an oral history on the early history of Silicon Valley and what was like growing up there for the Smithsonian Institute.

So it says, I was very lucky.

I had a father who was a pretty remarkable man.

He never graduated from high school.

He joined the Coast Guard in World War II and ferried troops around the world for General Patton.

And I think he was always getting into trouble and getting busted down.

He was a machinist by trade and worked very hard and was a kind of genius with his hands.

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And actually read this next paragraph to my daughter.

This is something we've been talking about and trying to teach her as well.

And so my note on this section is one of the best things a parent can do for a child.

Teach them to make things.

Teach them that they have agency and that they create and they can create things that other people can use and benefit from.

He had a word, and this is now Steve talking about one of the most important lessons that his father taught him.

He had a workbench out in the garage.

When I was about five or six, he sectioned off a little piece of it and said,

Steve, this is your workbench now.

And he gave me some of his smaller tools and showed me how to use a hammer and a saw and how to build things.

It was really very good for me.

He spent a lot of time with me teaching me how to build things, how to take things apart and put them back together.

And so then Steve talked about this energy that was in the place that he that was what it was like growing up in early Silicon Valley.

And he says there was a man that moved down the street from me.

He was an engineer at Hewlett Packard and he was a ham radio operator.

So yesterday I was going over all my highlights with my daughter.

I was reading some of these aloud to her and she was asking us like, well, what's a ham radio operator?

It's like, well, you got to Google like figure out what it is.

And she's like, this is very confusing.

I go, well, one way to think about this is that a ham radio was its amateur radio, right?

It was essentially podcasting before a few decades before podcasting was invented.

Somebody just sent me this fantastic note where he's like, I love the vibe of founders.

It has an underground pirate radio vibe.

And I just love that because one of my favorite Steve Jobs quotes is it's more fun to be a pirate than it is to join a Navy.

And so he's learning at this age, young age, he's learning from an engineer, a ham radio operator.

And this guy's name is Larry Lang and he taught Steve a lot about electronics.

And so Larry Lang would buy these things.

He'd buy and build these things called health kits, their products that you'd buy in kit form, right?

So you have to actually put them together.

They have detailed manuals on how to put things together, but you have to actually put them together.

And then when you're done, you actually want you're building something yourself with your hands and your mind, right?

And then it also fit like when you're done, it gives you this like finished product.

And he says, this experience gave me several things.

It gave me an understanding of what was inside a finished product and how it worked.

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But maybe even more importantly, what a line that this is going to end with here.

Wait, wait, wait till you see this.

But maybe even more importantly, it gave one the sense that one could build things that one saw around oneself in the universe.

These things were not mysteries anymore.

That's an excellent, excellent, excellent line.

Things became much more clear that they were the results of human creation, not these magical things that just appeared in your environment.

And then he talks about why school was so difficult for him.

And we're going to see this is something that this is an ever present in history's greatest entrepreneurs, an early love for reading.

So he says, my mother taught me how to read before I got to school.

And so when I got there, all I really wanted to do was just two things.

I wanted to read books because I love reading books and I wanted to go outside and chase butterflies.

And then we're going to see this is where I talked about this thing last week as well.

And the week before, maybe the all time greatest quote on understanding the mindset of an entrepreneur is comes from Ivan Shenard, the founder and owner of Panagonia.

If you want to understand the entrepreneur, study the juvenile delinquent.

And so we see this in Steve's early childhood.

He gets to school and he says, I encountered authority of a different kind than I had ever encountered before.

And I did not like it.

And they really almost got me.

They came this close to really beating any curiosity out of me.

And then he describes his difficulty with college.

This is Steve Jobs at 19.

This is so important to, to like pierce this myth that you can only start a company when you're young.

Or you have, you know, you're a 20 year old, 22 year old founder, you have it all figured out.

Well, one of the greatest entrepreneurs, maybe the greatest entrepreneur to ever do it at 19.

He says, I didn't know what I wanted to do with my life.

And so Steve's going to drop out of school.

He's going to drop into school, which means he's just taking classes for free that he was actually interested in that weren't part of his normal curriculum.

He's going to get a job at Atari.

He's going to travel to Europe, spends a bunch of time in India, comes back and then eventually they start what's going to wind up being the beginning of Apple.

This is from 1976 to 1985.

1985 is when he actually gets expelled from Apple the first time.

And so now we have Leslie Berlin giving us like this overview of this point of his life in 1976 when Steve and his friends Steve Wozniak began assembling what would become be known as the Apple one in the family garage.

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The word computer conjured up images of hulking machines tended by professional programmers, a single company IBM dominated the industry.

But Steve and Woz were part of a new gen, this is the most important sentence in this entire paragraph.

But Steve and Woz were part of a new generation of creative thinkers, engineers and hobbyists trying to build small cheap machines that they could program themselves.

And the reason that is so important is because think about this, like there was no such thing as a personal computer at this time.

The only thing the company that was dominating what was known as computers at that time, that company was founded 55 years before Apple.

And yet the two Steve saw something like, no, we can actually improve on this.

We can actually make something that other people can use.

We can make something wonderful that other people can use.

And so this idea is like Steve and Woz are part of a new generation of creative thinkers, engineers and hobbyists, right?

Trying to build something.

You and I can play this role today just in a different industry.

So it says when Apple launched, Steve was 21.

He was precocious, but inexperienced and unpolished.

At Apple's first board meeting, he put his bare feet on a conference room table, earning a quick rebuke from the board chairman.

The company's breakthrough came with the introduction of the Apple too.

Apple was one of the fastest growing companies in America.

And by the time Steve turned 30, he was a public face of a Fortune 500 company inside Apple.

His ideas and passion were inspiring, but Steve's management style was divisive.

Right before Steve gets kicked out in 1984, he's working on the Macintosh and I love what he said right here.

He believed with everything and he also says this in that interview I watched in addition to reading this book.

He believed with everything in his bones that no matter what, no matter what, every computer will be like this.

To Steve, Macintosh was everything technology should be.

It was streamlined and practical, simple and sophisticated.

A tool for enhancing creativity as much as productivity.

In another age, Steve believed the people on the Macintosh team would have been writers, musicians or artists.

Listen to how he talks. This is what he was talking about where he's like, you could tell people put a tremendous amount of love into what they're doing.

And he really disdained people that did like they made a product that was just so pedestrian, had no taste, had no judgment.

He just did it just to put something together so you can make a quick buck.

He hated that, right?

This is something Steve shares with like Enzo Ferrari.

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You go back and listen and read the biographies of Enzo Ferrari or listen to the podcast I've done on Enzo Ferrari.

Ferrari would describe his products the way you would describe your lover.

And Steve, to me, speaks very similarly.

The feelings and the passion that this is now, Steve, I'll get to my quote from Steve.

The feelings and the passion that people put into it were completely indistinguishable from a poet or a painter.

He called their work a form of love.

And so when you study Steve Jobs and the way he approached product design, building his company, this is not spreadsheet thinking.

He's not trying to make a product just so you can turn a pile of money into an even bigger pile of money, right?

There is an irrational love for the way like he approached the product that he made and the company that he built.

And then ironically, these type of craftsmen usually wind up with the money anyways.

And then this is what I meant about to him.

It was just absolutely inevitable that the innovation they made with the Macintosh is going to change the way other people made computers.

And he said, I remember the week before we launched the Mac, we all got together and we said, every computer is going to work this way.

You cannot argue about that anymore.

You can argue about how long it will take, but you can't argue about it anymore.

It is inevitable.

So that was the introduction by Leslie Berlin.

Then we get into Steve and his own words, right?

And he's recounting what the beginning of Apple was like.

After a few attempts, we managed to put together something that was the Apple one.

So he's talking about him and Wozniak and a small group of friends.

All of our friends wanted them too.

It turned out that it took maybe 50 hours to build one of these things by hand.

So that's going to take too long.

So like, okay, how do we do this faster?

We thought if we could get what's called a printed circuit board, we could just plug in the parts instead of having to hand wire the whole thing.

We could cut the assembly time down for maybe 50 hours to more like an hour.

Now listen to how they funded their primitive operation.

Are you willing to sell your car and put that money into your company?

Because that's what Steve Jobs did.

Woz sold his HP calculator, which were very expensive things at the time.

And I sold my VW bus.

And so they have this idea.

They show it to like the homebrew computer club.

This isn't in the book, but it's from in other biographies of Steve.

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There's a guy named Paul.
I think his name is Paul Terrell.
He owns the bike shop.
He says, hey, come and, you know, let's stay in touch.
I might be interested in buying these.
I'm pretty sure the next day or like very soon after Steve walks in.
And so one of my favorite pieces of early Apple like history trivia is the fact that their first major sale was made barefoot.
Steve walked into this guy's computer shop barefoot.
And so he's recounting this now.
And he says, the first computer store in the world, which was in Mountain View at the time, he walked in.
He says, well, I'll take 50 of these computers, but I want them fully assembled, which is a twist that we had never thought of.
So we went and bought the parts to build 100 computers.
We built 50 of them and delivered them.
And in the talk that I listened to Steve talks about how he got the money to do this, that he had cold called a bunch of parts suppliers and wind up getting them on like 30 day credit and then using the money from the bike shop to pay off the parts.
And so he says, we got paid in cash.
So we built 50 of them and delivered them.
We got paid in cash and then ran back and paid the people that sold us the parts.
We had this classic Marxian profit realization crisis, which was that our profit wasn't liquid.
It was in 50 computers sitting on the floor because they had made 100 of them sold 50.
And they're like, okay, now if we sell this other 50, this is where our profit is.
Right.
So then we did.
And this was fascinating.
They went up pitching the idea, which is going to wind up being Apple to two other companies to see if they wanted to do it like in their company or to invest.
They both said, no, we took our idea for the computer to a few companies.
One was HP where was was working.
And one was Atari where Steve was working Nolan Bush.
Now the founder of Atari were counts in his book and a bunch of other interviews I've seen with them.
Biggest regret in his life.
He was offered 30% of Apple, I think for like 50,000 or 100,000 or something like that.
And he said, he said, no.
So he says, no one was interested in pursuing it.
So we started our own company.
And so this is a very important part like we can't gloss over this.
This is absolutely fascinating.
If you actually slow down and thinking the story, he just told this is the very beginning.

[Transcript] Founders / #299 A new book on Steve Jobs! Make Something Wonderful: Steve Jobs in his own words

This is what a trillion dollar company looks like 50 years before it's a trillion dollar company.

No one else wanted to do this.

So guess what?

I guess we'll have to do it ourselves.

And it just starts with two hobbyists building something that they want them and their friends want to use.

And they're willing to fund it by selling their car and their calculator.

Fast forward a few years.

Steve is now 22 years old.

This is his first appearance in a national publication.

It is actually that the magazine in New Yorker sent a reporter down to the first annual personal computing expo.

And most of the people at the time alive had never seen a personal computer.

And so the reporter stumbles across a young Steve Jobs and we see this verbal mastery that he had.

He is the clearest communicator.

I have clearest thinker and the clearest communicator I have ever come across in my entire life.

This is he was 22.

I don't think he knew this reporter was coming.

And so they're just saying, Hey, tell us about what this Apple thing is.

Tell us what you're doing.

And listen to Steve here.

I wish we had these personal machines when I was growing up.

People have been hearing all sorts of things about computers during the past 10 years through the media.

Suppose computers have been controlling various aspects of their lives.

Yet in spite of that, most adults have no idea what a computer really is or what it can or can't do.

Now, for the first time, people can actually buy a computer for the price of a good stereo, interact with it and find out all about it.

It's analogous to the camera.

Shout out to Edwin Land.

There are thousands of people across the country taking photography courses.

They'll never be professional photographers.

They just want to understand what the photographic process is all about.

Same with computers.

We started a little personal computer manufacturing company in a garage in Los Altos in 1976.

Now we're the largest personal computer company in the world.

We make what we think of as the Rolls Royce of personal computers.

It's a domesticated computer.

People expect blinking lights, but what they find is that it looks like a portable typewriter, which connected to a suitable readout screen is able to display in color.

There's a feedback it gives to people, and the enthusiasm of the users is tremendous.

And so then in the book is something I don't think I've ever seen before.

It's a transcript of this speech that Steve gives.

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He would be around 28 years old.
This is 1983, so he's around 28 years old.
It's at the International Design Conference in Aspen.
And the theme of the speech is that computers in society are out on a first date.
And so listen to what he does.
He says, if you looked at computers, they look like garbage.
All the great product designers are off designing automobiles or buildings.
Hardly any of them are designing computers.
So something that appears over and over again, and something I cannot stop thinking about.
And I just read it randomly.
I think it was in Isaacson's biography of Steve, where it says,
one of his great talents was spotting markets full of second rate products.
Steve is a world class product designer, right?
Even at this age.
And he's saying, this is kind of weird.
Like, I think this industry is going to be extremely important.
Other people don't seem to agree with me.
And we know that because all the talent is out doing other things, right?
They're designing automobiles or they're designing buildings.
Like that's where the money is.
None of them are designing computers.
So I've just spotted this market full of second rate products.
Sure, I can do better than that.
And so it says, we have a shot at putting a great object out there.
And then he has an incredibly interesting idea.
Like how important a product is, I don't think I've ever heard this before.
How important a product is based on the time that you spend interacting with it.
He is comparing and contrasting the opportunity in automobiles and architecture to computers,
right?
All the great designers are off doing this other stuff.
Why aren't any great designers doing this?
People are going to spend more time interacting with these machines
than they do interacting with automobiles today.
People are going to spend two, three hours a day interacting with these machines.
Think about, and he even undershot, right?
Between the MacBook that you probably have and your iPhone,
you're probably spending six, seven hours a day on this.
He's saying people are going to be spending two to three hours a day interacting with these
machines.
That's longer than they spend in their car.
And so the industrial design, the software design, and how people interact with these things
certainly must be given the consideration that we give automobiles today, if not a lot more.
And then he goes into the fact that he thinks he has this giant opportunity because it's still early.

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That most people, if they were in their 30s when he's given a speech, they'd lived most of their life without a computer at all.

And his whole point was like, well, that you're going to be the last generation that ever happens to.

And he was saying that in 1983, it's even more true now.

And so he says in the 80s, the fact is that computers and society are out on a first date.

We have a chance to make these things beautiful.

We can actually make a dent in the universe, right?

It's what he's saying.

We can change the trajectory of this industry.

We can hold it to a higher standard.

They don't have to be these ugly, faceless, blinking machines, like make them look beautiful.

When I was going to school, I had, oh, and this is such a fascinating idea too.

And something I personally identify with, books kept me out of jail.

This is what Steve said. That's crazy.

So he says, when I was going to school, I had a few great teachers and a lot of mediocre teachers.

And the thing that probably kept me out of jail was the books.

I could go read with Aristotle or Plato.

I almost said Plato.

Oh, come on, man.

I could go read with Aristotle or Plato, wrote without an intermediary in the way.

And a book was a phenomenal thing.

It got right from the source of the destination without anything in the middle.

So books are phenomenal things.

And this is interesting because for the first time we might be able to do this.

I mean, you could pick up a book and it's definitely what we do.

It's like, you read enough books about like, I have an idea of how Steve Jobs taught because I've spent an insane, insane amount of time adjusting his talks, his reading, his biographies, his own writing.

And so I have like a, you know, after a while, you can have like a little, you know, Steve Jobs on your shoulder.

I'm like, what would Steve do in this situation?

And I've done this with a handful of other people.

You'll see it in the podcast because I'll read every single thing that I could find on them.

And so that's like the tell.

But what he's saying is like, one day we should, we can just put all this information into a computer and ask what Aristotle would say or Plato would say.

And then this is fascinating.

Again, it goes back to the power, how powerful ideas can be.

And the fact that you can hear one line, read one book and it just stays with you forever.

He's saying this in 1983, the book is going to end with this email that he sends himself a year or maybe a few months before he dies.

And it's how he says, we at Apple feel that for some crazy reason we're in the right place at the right time to put something back.

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And what I mean by that is most of us didn't make the clothes we're wearing and we didn't cook or grow the food that we eat.

And we're speaking a language that was developed by other people and we use mathematics that was developed by other people.

We are constantly taking and the ability to put something back into the pool of human experience is extremely neat.

That is why the book is named Make Something Wonderful.

When you make something wonderful, you put it back into the stream of humanity.

You say, I was here.

My life mattered and I wanted to make something that made the lives of other people better.

And so not only is Steve telling us that with his words, but we saw that with his actions.

He dedicated his life to making something wonderful.

These tools and these products that you and I use to this day, more than a decade after he's gone.

And so then we go into Steve talking about the Macintosh.

This is a year before he gets kicked out of Apple.

What I see here is something, again, I deeply admire about him.

He had this deep historical knowledge.

He had it when he was a young man.

He could talk like this when he was 21, 22 years old.

He still had it at 30.

He was still talking about it when he was in his 50s.

This is a quote from Steve Jobs, a lost interview that I'm going to read that really sets up this section of the book.

I really think the book and this interview goes so well together.

And so he's asked the question, how do you know what is the right direction to move in?

And this is what Steve said that gives me goosebumps.

When it comes down to exposing yourself to the best things that humans have done, then try to bring those things into what you are doing.

Picasso had a saying, good artist copy, great artist steal.

And we've always been shameless about stealing great ideas.

He goes back and thinks about the construction and the invention of the Macintosh and the marketing and sales of the Macintosh.

Went back and looked at how Alexander Graham Bell invented and marketed the telephone.

And he talks about Henry Ford as well.

Edwin Lann did the same thing when Edwin Lann went and invented the instant, the Polaroid camera, right?

Invented not only the camera, but the entire, in the entire in-syphotography industry.

He went back and said, OK, well, how do you market a product that is like never existed?

No one asked Alexander Graham Bell to make the telephone, right?

And so we see Steve right here calling all the study he had done up to this point.

Now he brings it back and he talks about how it influences and influences his work.

And so he says, now he's talking about the Macintosh, right?

But he's going to use this historical analogy.

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It's sort of like in 1844 when the telegraph was invented.
And it was an amazing breakthrough in communications.
And you can actually send messages from New York to San Francisco in an afternoon.
And some people talked about putting a telegraph on every desk in America to improve productivity.
So we'll pause right there.
Again, main point here, Steve was constantly placing the products he was making in a historical perspective.
You can't do that unless you studied and learn from history.
So he talks about this is kind of like 1844 with the telegraph.
But here's the problem.
He's not going to compare the Macintosh to the telegraph.
He's like, oh, it's actually not a telegraph.
And I'll tell you why it's not a telegraph.
It's a telephone.
And so he says, but it wouldn't have worked.
And what is he talking about?
Some people talked about putting a telegraph on every desk in America to improve productivity.
And so Steve says, but it wouldn't have worked.
It wouldn't have worked.
And the reason it wouldn't have worked.
Now think about that.
He does this a lot.
If a line is important, he repeats it.
It is a way of communicating to other people that it is important.
I've seen this over and over again.
Repetition is persuasive.
So go back to this.
And the reason I wouldn't have worked was because you had to learn this whole sequence of strange incantations, which is Morse code, right?
You can't send telegraphs at this time without learning Morse code.
What's the problem with that?
It takes about 40 hours to learn Morse code.
How many humans are willing to invest 40 hours?
You're going to put a telegraph on every desk.
So it means every single human that has a telegraph has to invest 40 hours to learn how to use this thing.
Come on.
Humans aren't doing that.
A very small percentage of humans are willing to do that.
And so this leads to Steve's next point.
So fortunately in the 1870s, Alexander Graham Bell filed the patents for the telephone.
Another radical breakthrough in communication that performed basically the same function.
But people already knew how to use it.

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And why do you know how to use it?

Because you knew how to talk.

You don't have to teach people how to speak.

They already do it.

The neatest thing about it was that in addition to allowing you to communicate with just words, it allowed you to sing.

It allowed you to intone your words with meaning beyond the simple linguistics.

We are in the exact parallel situation today.

That is Steve's quote.

We're in the exact same, the exact, the same.

Now I can't even speak.

Apparently somebody has to teach me how to speak.

We're in the same exact parallel situation today.

And that is what Macintosh is all about.

It's the first telephone of our industry.

Before I move on, let's go back to that note at the top.

Steve was constantly placing the products he was making in historical perspective.

You can't do that unless you studied and learned from history.

So then the book has an interview with Michael Moritz.

At this time, Michael Moritz, there should be a biography on this guy.

He's not only a great writer, but he was a journalist then turned venture capitalist for Sequoia.

Now he's like a multi-billionaire.

But there's an interview that's taking place in May 1984.

And Michael actually wrote this excellent history of the early days of Apple.

I got the updated version of the book.

It's episode 76.

If you want to go back and listen to it, I'm going to reread the book soon.

It's actually been on my table for a while.

So it's returned to the little kingdom, Steve Jobs and the creation of Apple.

And I just want to read two quotes from that book before I jump back into this interview.

That's in Make Something Wonderful.

And so Michael is talking about founders and he says,

Founders, at least the very best of them are unstoppable, irrepressible forces of nature.

All of the many founders I've encountered, Steve is the most captivating.

And then maybe even more importantly, he talks about Steve's career.

There is no other parallel.

It's only Steve.

Many are familiar with the reemergence of Apple.

They may not be as familiar with the fact that it has few if any parallels.

When did a founder ever return to the company from which he had been rudely rejected to engineer a turnaround as complete and spectacular as Apple's?

While turnarounds are difficult at any circumstances, they are doubly difficult in a technology company.

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It is not too much of a stretch to say that Steve founded Apple not once, but twice.

And the second time he was alone.

Now we go back to the book.

This is happening May 1984.

Michael and Steve covered a wide range of topics, including Steve's thoughts on product design.

And during this interview, Steve made this fantastic point.

He just had more time to make mistakes and then to learn.

And so what he's saying is like, you know what it takes to make something great?

Time.

And so Steve says, I don't think my taste in aesthetics is that much different than a lot of other people's.

The difference is that I just get to be really stubborn about making things as good as we all know they can be.

That is the only difference.

And so Michael Moritz, Andrew Jackson, he's like, yeah, but I think you're just being modest.

And so Steve responds, well, things get more refined as you make mistakes.

I've had a chance to make a lot of mistakes.

Your aesthetics get better as you make mistakes.

But the real big thing is if you're going to make something, it doesn't take any more energy and rarely does it take more money to make it really great.

All it takes is a little more time and a willingness to do so.

A willingness to persevere until it's really great.

And so then there's this interview with Newsweek that happens right after Steve gets kicked out of Apple.

And so we get an idea of what Steve thought about his life when he was 30 years old.

And he says, in my wildest imagination, I could not have come up with such a wild ending to all this.

I had hoped that my life would take on a quality of an interesting tapestry where I would have weaved in and out of Apple.

I would have been there for a period of time and maybe I would have gone off and done something else to contribute.

But connected with Apple and then maybe come back and stay for a lengthy period of time.

He had no idea how right he is going to wind up being.

It's just going to take what another 13 years, 14 years from where we are in the story.

And then he talks about what's next for him.

And this is, I think, one of the most admirable things about Steve.

Because think about it.

Well, let me read this to you first.

He says, I want to build things.

What I'm best at doing is finding a group of talented people and making things with them.

I want to make things and why this is so amazing is because at this point, the numbers I've seen have been varied,

but they're somewhere in this range.

He had about \$70 million at that time.

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Okay, so if you adjust for inflation in our present day, that's like being 30 years old and having \$200 million today.

He could have stayed retired.

He could have become an investor.

He could have taken it easy and he didn't go.

He couldn't.

You could argue, and I would argue, and this is the argument I would make.

Not that he didn't.

He couldn't.

He could not go that route because at his core, all he wanted to do was make great products.

That is all he ever cared about.

He cared about it when he was a young person, when he was five or six years old on that workbench with his dad.

They were some of us earlier.

He cared about it when he started Apple when he was 20.

He cared about it when he was still making great products up until the day he died.

You see that idea right here in the text.

He's 30 years old.

He could go off into the sunset, never hear from him.

Be a wealthy man for the rest of his life.

Live a life of leisure.

He's like, no, I want to build things.

I want to make things when I'm best at his finding a group of talented people and making great things with them.

Then he talks about why.

The outside world looks at success from a numerical point of view.

My yardstick might be quite different than that.

My yardstick may be how every computer that's designed from here on out will have to be at least as good as a Macintosh.

In other words, he's saying, I want to put a dent in the universe.

I already did it once.

I'm going to do it again.

And so that's when the book goes into part two from 1985 to 1986.

Leslie Berlin gives us this really quick and fantastic overview about this point in his life.

The years after Steve left Apple were among the toughest of his career and the most formative.

Determined to build a new great computer company, he started next with several members of the Macintosh team.

We'll make a whole bunch of mistakes, he said, but at least they'll be new and creative ones.

At the same time, he bought Pixar, which was spun off from filmmaker George Lucas's empire.

The technical expertise at Pixar attracted Steve.

Its initial product was a high-end graphics computer that costs more than \$100,000.

That is the computer he thought, or excuse me, the company he thought he was going to buy.

You obviously know how that ends, right?

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But this is a crazy thing.

But both Pixar and Next quickly ran into trouble.

Imagine running not one, but two failing companies simultaneously.

And then the outcome, obviously selling Next to Apple and then Pixar becoming the greatest animation studio.

First of all, the first computer animation studio ever, but the greatest animation studio since Disney. It's insane.

But back to this, both Next and Pixar quickly ran into trouble.

Within six years of Next's launch, the entire founding team, other than Steve, had resigned.

And Pixar, meanwhile, was eking out an existence.

And so not only is Steve one of the greatest founders to ever do it.

He's one of the greatest investors to ever do it.

This is insane.

I'm going to reread Creativity Inc.

Because I haven't read it.

I've read it like 270 books ago or something like that.

And just this idea, it's like, okay, he bought it from George Lucas for \$5 million with the agreement that he's going to give George Lucas \$5 million and then commit to investing at least another \$5 million.

So that's \$10 million total.

And then before they wind up doing the deal and actually becoming profitable, he dumps another \$60 million into it.

Steve's enthusiasm kept him writing check after check to Pixar, ultimately investing some \$60 million of his own money.

And he talks about that.

He did that for a decade.

Ed Catmull, his co-founder and the guy that wrote Creativity Inc. talks about this in a few books that I've read on Pixar,

where it's like, oh, how do you pay the bills?

Like, oh, we have a couple of things that we're doing.

And then whatever the deficit is, I go and meet Steve every month and he just writes me a check from his personal checking account.

How insane is this?

Back to what Leslie Berlin is selling.

Steve learned how to hone a company to its essence, even when it was painful.

He shifted Nexus Focus to selling software.

That shift meant closing a factory and laying off more than 200 of Nexus 530 employees.

Meanwhile, Pixar stripped away its advertising and hardware businesses and entered into agreement with Disney,

all to pursue with something what sometimes seemed an impossible dream,

to make fully computer animated feature films which had never been done before Toy Story.

It was obviously the first one in history, which goes on to be a massive success.

After nearly a decade of difficulty, the streamlined necks in Pixar both transformed into unlikely

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success stories.

At the end of 1995, Pixar premiered Toy Story and the same month it held its initial public offering.

A year later, Apple, in a need of an operating system, bought NeXT for \$427 million.

Quote from Steve, if you really look closely, most overnight successes took a long time.

I would say all of them, I can't think of an exception to that at the moment.

If you really look closely, most overnight successes took a long time.

What I wrote to myself when I got through these few paragraphs, how many people are willing to go through a decade of difficulty without quitting.

And so that in the book, there's this picture of this excellent memo that he sent to the team at NeXT in 1986.

It's about making sure that you're running an efficient company.

And what Steve says here reminds me of what Sam Walton said in his autobiography, that he always ran a real tight organization, that he had no excess people.

And so Steve says, in revising our headcount requirements downwards,

I encourage you to remember that there is a very subtle line when crossed an increased headcount causes you to be a manager instead of a contributor.

I believe that if we turn ourselves into managers instead of doers, both our schedule and the greatness of our product will suffer.

Let's not let this happen.

It is better to have fewer people, even if it means doing less.

Let's build our company slowly and carefully.

And so it's during this time of struggle.

In 1991, he's actually asked to give a speech to the freshman, the incoming freshman of his alma mater.

Do you call it an alma mater if you never graduated?

So from Reed College, he's asked to give this speech.

And the reason this is important, and you'll see which point I chose to highlight,

is because next to his computers, they're not selling and Pixar just had a round of layoffs.

So he's saying this like the title or the main idea behind the speeches that characters built not in good times, but in bad times.

And if you think about it in the context of where Steve's at in his life, it's almost like he's giving advice to himself.

So he says, the last experience I wanted to account for you.

There is a man, and I think he's here today.

His name is Jack Dunman.

He used to be the dean of the school.

He was one of the heroes of my life while I was here because Jack looked the other way when I was staying on campus without paying.

He looked the other way when I was taking classes without being a formal student and paying the tuition.

And oftentimes, when I was at the end of my rope, because Steve was flat broke at this point in his life,

when I was at the end of my rope, Jack would go for a walk with me and I would discover a \$20 bill

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in my coat pocket after the walk,
with no mention of it from Jack before, during, or after.
I learned more about generosity from Jack and all the people here at the school than I learned anywhere else in my life.
The things I learned here stayed with me.
Character is built not in good times, but in bad times, not in a time of plenty, but in a time of adversity.
So I thank you for teaching me how to be hungry and how to keep that with me my entire life.
And so one thing I love what the Steve Jobs Archive is doing is they're organizing Steve's emails.
And a few of his emails show up in the book and they're just absolutely fantastic.
And so this, this is an email exchange between Steve, Intel CEO Andy Grove, who's also a mentor and a badass,
and then an Intel engineer.
And so I think Andy's like 20 years older than Steve, something like that.
And it's just hard not to love Andy Grove teaching a younger Steve Jobs.
And there's just so many lessons that now because the Steve Jobs Archive has organized this, that essentially like Andy can teach us at the same time he's teaching Steve because we're reading along, right?
And so this is the background.
It says as Pixar became a leader in graphics, Steve and his mentor Andy Grove discussed how Intel might learn from Pixar.
When an Intel engineer tried to follow up Steve resisted.
And so we see this email chain between Steve, this engineer at Intel whose name is not released and then Steve Jobs.
And so the engineers like, Hey, you know, I talked to Andy, we're going to study from you.
We're taking this really seriously, like, let's get our two teams together or whatever.
And then Steve hits them back.
This is in 1995.
Pixar's secrets were invented through significant investment over 10 years or more, and we value them highly.
What does Intel propose to give Pixar for disclosing and licensing its secrets to Intel?
And so the engineer responds like, Oh, well, you know, we have not entered into any financial arrangement in exchange for good ideas for our microprocessors in the past.
And we don't have an intention to do so in the future.
And so then Steve did not like that.
And then we see in his response, this approach has not served you well in the past as evidence by your poor graphics architectures and performance.
Maybe you should think of changing it for the future.
And so then Steve emails Andy, and this is going to, this is going to be the opening for Andy to school and to teach Steve Jobs, like the younger Steve Jobs and Steve's credit.
He also says this in the lost interview, the one I keep referencing that I watched and listened to in addition to reading this book.
He's just like, Listen, I don't care about being right.

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I care about being excellent.

So if somebody presents information to me, you can ask people on my team.

And there's a different opinion.

Like I will change my idea.

I don't care where the ideas come from.

I just want to be excellent.

And we see that like in the email, like he has this opinion is like Intel should pay us for this.

And Andy is going to correct that and explain why.

And Steve has such reverence for the people that laid the foundation that he's working upon that he agrees immediately.

And so Steve emails Andy, Andy, maybe it's just me, but I find the engineers approach extremely arrogant.

Given Intel's dismal showing and understanding computer graphics, architectural issues in the past, if I were going to make hundreds of millions of something,

I sure as hell would be willing to pay for the best advice money could buy.

Anyway, this wasn't this isn't a sales pitch.

I just wanted you to know what I thought.

And so when I read Andy's response, I went and do what I normally do is like, I want to know how old they are when they're saying this stuff.

And so at this point, it says, I wrote Steve is 40 and Andy is around 60.

And so this is what Andy says.

He mails Steve back, Steve, I am firmly on the engineer side on this one.

He is taking your offer to help us very seriously.

He rounded up the best technical people and was ready to go when you when you introduced a brand new element into the discussion money.

You and I have talked many times about this subject.

You never suggested or hinted at this being a commercial exchange.

I took your offer to help us exactly as that help, not as an offer of a commercial relationship.

You may remember that from time to time I offered suggestions that pertain to your business.

I gave what I had, put some thought into the problem I saw you were facing and it never encountered my mind to charge you for it.

In my view, that's what friendly companies and friends do for each other.

In the long run, these things balance out.

I'm sorry, you don't feel that way.

We will be worse off as a result and so will the industry.

And then we see Steve in real time learning.

This is going to remind me of what Michael Jordan said in his autobiography on episode 213.

I am not so dominant that I can't listen to creative ideas coming from other people.

Successful people listen.

Those who don't listen don't survive long.

That is the end of Michael Jordan's quote.

We jump into Steve Jobs email to Andy Grove.

Andy, I have many faults, but one of them is not in gratitude.

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And I do agree with you that in the long long run, these things balance out.
Therefore, I have changed my position 180 degrees.
We will freely help engineer make his processors much better for 3D graphics.
Please ask engineer to call me and we will arrange for a meeting
as soon as the appropriate Pixar technical folks can be freed up from the film.
Thank you for the clear perspective.
So then we get another interview from 1986 of Steve.
This is after Pixar's release of Toy Story and its successful IPO,
but next, so it's after he fixes the Pixar,
but next is still struggling and hasn't been purchased by Apple yet.
There is something that's in this interview.
So I was listening in the car, I was listening to the lost interview with Steve
and my wife was listening to it with me.
And Steve goes into the fact that he believes with the web and where computers and the internet is
going.
And he says this in 1996, by the way, that it's going to go from a computational device
to a communication device that is going to be an unbelievable amount of commerce.
There's going to be billions and billions of billions of dollars transacted on the web.
This is way before it happened.
And she even mentioned, she goes, oh, he nailed that. I was like, yes, he did.
And you see this in this interview too.
It's like, again, the clarity of thought, deep understanding of not only the industry is operating now,
but how these things can change in the future.
I think most large companies and medium sized companies and even small companies
are starting to look at the web as the ultimate direct to consumer distribution.
This is exactly what he said in that talk, the lost interview as well.
By passing all middlemen going directly from the supplier to the consumer.
That is a powerful concept when you think about it.
That is a powerful concept when you think about it.
What does he mean?
It is not just shopping for goods and services.
It is shopping for information.
You are going to be buying information or finding information
and really making a lot of decisions about what you're going to do with your life
and what you're going to purchase from the web.
He continues, there's a lot of things happening with the web
in terms of allowing people to access information that they would have never have before.
What this does, of course, is let special interest groups get together.
In other words, you're able to find other people just like you.
The same exact interest that you have and you can learn from each other
and you can do it whenever you want because it's all on demand.
That's insane.
Then the interview goes back to this idea.

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How did this feel to be forced out of the company that you created?

Even 10 years later, he says this in the lost interviews.

If we keep talking about this, I'm going to get emotional.

It's still very painful.

In this interview, he says, of course, that was a very painful time, but you just march forward and you learn from it.

One of the things I've always tried to coach myself on was not being afraid to fail.

When you have something that doesn't work out,

a lot of times people reaction is to get very protective about never wanting to fall on their face again.

I think that's a big mistake because you never achieve what you want without falling on your face a few times in the process of getting there.

I've tried not to be afraid to fail.

Matter of fact, I've failed quite a bit since I left Apple.

Then he's asked, what do you think about the problems that Apple's having?

They're losing money, their market share is evaporating, their product line sucks.

He says, this is so fantastic.

He says this right before he's coming back.

Apple's problem is that their differentiation evaporated.

What did Jeff Bezos' last shareholder say?

Differentiation is survival right here.

Then we have Steve Jobs saying Apple's problem is that their differentiation evaporated.

The cure for Apple is to innovate its way out of its current predicament.

There's a lot of good people left at Apple that are capable of doing that with proper leadership, which is what has been missing.

When you go back and you look at Steve giving talks in the 70s, the 80s, the 90s, there's even a talk where Edwin Land talks about where he does this right off the cuff.

He's like, eventually, we're going to have this device.

It's going to fit in your shirt pocket.

You'll be able to take photos.

You'll be able to communicate to each other.

I think he said in the early 70s, Steve talks about building smaller post-PC devices even in the 80s. Something more like an iPad than an iPhone.

But they talk about this here, where Steve sees an opportunity and he says,

I think this is 1996, I think.

I think the PC as we know it is going to be around for quite some time, but the heart of the question is,

are we entering a time window where we might see the first successful post-PC devices?

That is an idea from the 80s from Steve and from the 70s from Edwin Land.

It is appearing in 1996 with Steve.

The iPhone is 11 years away.

It's incredible how many times in these books, whether the story of a person's life or the story of an industry, they have an idea.

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They don't understand how to get there.

They take a decade, two decades, three decades to get there.

But that idea is almost like somebody implanted that idea in their brain and is now part of them.

They never let go of the idea.

That's the way I feel that Steve was about these post-PC devices that he would talk about a lot.

So he goes back to this idea of the corporate, he calls it corporate lifestyle.

I think we would refer this, maybe it's like corporate culture to this day.

And his point was that the contrast between like Apple and IBM, like IBM's more hierarchical.

And his whole thing is like, great.

We'll come from everywhere.

I mentioned this to you a few times, but I think there's this excellent documentary on HBO.

It's called The Defiant Ones.

Technically, it's about the relationship between Jimmy Ivey and Dr. Dre and early hip-hop industry.

Really, it's one of the greatest documentaries on entrepreneurship.

If you look at it and watch it through that lens.

But in that documentary, Jimmy Ivey is saying, great can come from anywhere.

And what he was talking about is the fact that he found a demo tape that Eminem handed out at like the Rap Olympics

that was handed to I think Jimmy's A&R that then he gave to Jimmy.

Jimmy heard it and he's like, I'll give it to Dr. Dre and like the rest is history.

And he was talking about, you know, this guy, this is like the middle of nowhere.

There was no like giant hip-hop scene in Detroit at the time.

It was all, you know, West Coast, East Coast at the time.

It's like, great can come from anywhere.

Great can come from anywhere.

Why did I think about that?

Because listen to what Steve is going to say to us here.

I would say Apple had a very, if it had a corporate lifestyle,

a few very big differences to other corporate lifestyles that I'd seen.

The first one was a real belief that there wasn't a hierarchy of ideas

that mapped onto the hierarchy of the organization.

Damn, that's a good line.

There isn't a hierarchy of ideas that are going to map onto the hierarchy of the organization.

In other words, great ideas could come from anywhere.

And we better sort of treat people in a much more egalitarian sense

in terms of where the ideas came from.

Great can come from anywhere.

And so their conversation continues.

And she's like Terry Gross, I think, or Gloss.

I think her name is Terry Gross.

She's the one interviewing him at this point.

And they're like, well, this is like a very different approach to corporate hierarchy.

It's like more like how startups think.

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But you know, isn't that like a very high stress place?
And so then he's reflecting on his early days at Apple.
And you know, we've heard ideas like this from other sources,
but this is fascinating because it then leads him to say something about, you know,
I've never really thought of my life and my work as different things.
And he says, well, we were very young and most of the folks were not married,
so they could work 15-hour days.
But you didn't have a typical situation where you worked so that you could support your life.
Your work was your life in many cases.
Then he's asked the follow-up question.
Do you feel you've changed from that?
Is that your life still?
In his response, I feel it is still my life, but it is not all of my life.
It's less of a percentage, but I still don't really.
And there's a pause.
I've never been able to think of my work and my life as different things.
They're the same thing.
And then he says, as he gets older, now he's a family, he's married, he's got kids.
It used to be 99% of my life and now maybe it's 50% of my life,
but he never thought of them as different things.
So then he's invited to give a speech at Palo Alto High School.
And this is actually for the high school graduation.
And I'm just going to read you some highlights here
because I think what happens is he's really highlighting what he feels
is actually important in life.
And he says, I'm supposed to offer you some wisdom and advice
that you may remember along your travels.
Be aware of the world's magical, mystical, and artistic sides.
The most important things in life are not the goal-oriented materialistic things
that everyone and everything tries to convince you to strive for.
Most of you know that deep inside.
I bet many of you have had some of these intuitive feelings
about what you could do with your lives.
We are never taught to listen to our intuitions,
to develop and nurture our intuitions.
But if you do pay attention to these subtle insights,
you can make them come true.
People will come at you with reasons why you shouldn't do these things.
And so then he gives some positive advice.
Be a creative person.
Creativity equals connecting previously unrelated experiences and insights
that others don't see.
And one way to be more creative, he says, is you need to get a more diverse set

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of experiences.
And how do you do that?
By not traveling the same path as everyone else.
And he continues, so to be a creative person,
you have to invest in yourself by exploring uncharted paths
that are outside the realm of your past experience.
Seek out new dimensions of yourself,
especially those that carry a romantic scent.
But one has no way of knowing which of these paths will lead anywhere in advance.
That's one of the most important lines.
There's no way to tell in advance.
One has no way of knowing which of these paths will lead anywhere in advance.
The only thing one can do is to believe that some of what you follow with your heart
will indeed come back to make your life much richer.
And it will.
And you will gain an ever firmer trust in your instincts and intuition.
Don't be a career.
The enemy of most dreams and intuitions.
And one of the most dangerous and stifling concepts ever invented by humans
is the career.
A career is a concept for how one is supposed to progress through stages
during the training for and practicing of your work life.
Many people find what they believe to be safe harbors,
like a lawyer or accountant,
only to wake up 10 or 15 years later and discover the price they paid.
So I just want to pause here to interject
because I do think I have a unique perspective from my vantage point here.
I obviously know a lot of my friends are lawyers or accountants
and, you know, they're not like, I don't think Steve's picking on those two occupations per se,
but I do know a ton of them that feel this way.
But I also talk to a lot of founders because of the podcast, right?
And you know what a surprising regret is, I think, from the outside?
How many of this appears over and over again?
Building a big company.
You'd be shocked at how many founders start out with a small idea,
gets more successful, turns into a big company,
and then their business grew so much and as a result had to change
and it changed into something that they no longer love or enjoy.
We are terrible predictors of what we will think humans, all humans,
terribly bad at predicting what we think we actually want
or actually make us happy.
And there's so many conversations where like, I cannot believe this,
like what I thought I wanted,

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what I thought other people told me was successful.
It's like this giant company by headcount or by complexity or whatever.
It's like, I don't like it anymore.
So I just want to, again, not try to tell you what to do, obviously, I never would.
Just telling you like what other people experienced and maybe, you know, you can figure it out for yourself.
This part is fantastic.
Make your avocation, your vocation.
Make what you love your work.
The journey is the reward.
People think that you've made it when you've gotten to the end of the rainbow and got a pot of gold, but they're wrong.
The reward is the crossing the rainbow.
That's easy for me to say.
I got the pot of gold, literally.
But if you get to the pot of gold, you already know that that's not the reward and you go looking for another rainbow to cross.
And so the summary of that paragraph for me is time is the stuff life is made of, quote from Ben Franklin.
That is literally how you spend your time is all that matters.
That is what your life is.
Think of your life as a rainbow.
This is again, maybe my favorite quote in the entire book.
Think of your life as a rainbow arcing across the horizon of this world.
You appear, have a chance to blaze in the sky and then you disappear.
What is he saying?
Go for it like your life depends on it.
Why?
Because it does.
It literally does.
The two endpoints of everyone's rainbow.
This is again, think one of the, he's got a ton of great ideas, right?
But something you'll, if you study Steve, what he says over and over again, it's like if you need to use your inevitable death as a tool to make decisions on how you're going to spend your time.
The two endpoints of everyone's rainbow are birth and death.
We all experience both completely alone.
And yet most people of your age have not thought about these events very much, much less even seen them in others.
How many of you have seen the birth of another human?
It's a miracle.
And how many of you have witnessed the death of a human?
It is a mystery beyond our comprehension.

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No human alive knows what happens to us after our death.
Some believe this, others that, but no one really knows.
Again, most people your age have not thought about these events very much.
It's as if we shelter you from them,
afraid that the thought of mortality will somehow wound you.
For me, it's the opposite.
To know my arc will fall makes me want to blaze while I'm in the sky.
Not for others, but for myself, for the trail that I know that I'm leaving.
And I love the way he ends his speech.
Now, as you live your arc across the sky,
you want to have as few regrets as possible.
Remember, regrets are different from mistakes.
Mistakes are those things that you did and you wish you could do over again.
In some, you were a fool.
In others, he says, usually concerning women.
That's hilarious.
In some, you were a fool, usually concerning women.
In others, you were scared.
In others, you hurt someone else.
Some mistakes are deep and others are not.
But if your intent was pure, then they are almost always enriching in some way.
So mistakes are things that you did and wish you could do over again.
Regrets are most often things you didn't do and wish you did.
So then right before he goes back to Apple, Steve gives an interview that's all about Pixar.
And so, of course, I had to pull out a couple of things because I love...
Steve always is always quoting and talking about what he learned from Walt Disney,
which I think is amazing.
And so this is a very interesting idea that you need to be editing before.
You can actually, you know, people think of editing as something that happens after the fact.
And Steve's whole point is like, yeah, but you can also edit before you make it.
Walt Disney realized many decades ago that animation was so expensive
that you couldn't afford to animate 10 times more than what you need.
Matter of fact, you don't want to animate even 10% more than what you need.
And therefore, the only conclusion you can come to is that you have to edit your film before you
make it.
Working with Disney gave us access to that wisdom that you can't buy for love or money.
The art of storytelling is very old and no amount of technology can turn a bad story into a good story.
I don't think it has changed a long time and I'm not sure that it will.
He's talking about storytelling.
Meanwhile, you can hardly find an Apple II around too much anymore.
And it's not clear whether you'll be able to boot up a Macintosh five years from now.
Sooner or later, they all become part of the sedimentary layer that is the foundation for new
innovation.

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By contrast, Disney released its first animated feature film, Snow White, in 1937.

That's 60 years ago.

A few years ago, they really sit on video and sold 28 million copies, making probably around a quarter billion dollars of profits 60 years after its initial release.

And then they include Steve's interview in this book called In the Company of Giants.

It came out, I think, in 1997.

I read the book and covered it all the way back on episode 208.

Highly recommend buying the book.

It's an interview with Steve and, I think, 15 other technology company founders.

It's excellent.

And so the main theme, I would say, of that interview is that you better have great, great people.

You have to go for great.

This is something that Steve talked about his entire career.

You better have great people.

There are no shortcuts around quality and quality starts with people.

I spend 20% of my time, one day a week, even now, recruiting.

And so he goes on about that point for a while, and then the interviewer asks him a great question.

If finding eight players is so important, how can you tell who an eight player is and who isn't?

And this is what Steve said.

That's a very hard question.

Ultimately, there are two paths.

If a candidate has been in the workplace for a while, you have to look at the results.

There are people who look so good on paper and talk such a good story, but have no results behind them.

They can't point to breakthroughs or successful products that they shipped and played an integral part in.

Ultimately, the results should lead you to the people.

As a matter of fact, that is how I find great people.

I look at great results and I find out who's responsible for them.

But then it makes a great point.

Startups usually don't have unlimited capital, so you have to find undiscovered.

You have to be the one discovering the great talent.

However, sometimes young people haven't had the opportunity yet to be in a position or influence to create such results.

So here you must evaluate potential.

It's certainly more difficult, but the primary attributes of potential are intelligence and the ability to learn quickly.

Much of it is also drive and passion.

Hard work makes up for a lot.

And then he talks about his counterintuitive job interview technique.

Many times in a job interview, I will purposely upset someone.

I'll criticize their prior work.

I'll do my homework, find out what they worked on and say, God, that really turned out to be a

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bomb.

That really turned out to be a bozo product.

Why did you work on that?

The worst thing that someone can do in an interview is to agree with me and not go under.

What I look for is someone who comes right back at me and says, you're dead wrong, and here is why.

And he places everything he's discussing in the proper context.

It's like, why are you doing all this?

And he has a very simple objective.

He says, my job is to make sure the work is as good as it should be and to get people to stretch beyond their best.

Part of the CEO's job is to control and beg and plead and threaten at times to do whatever is necessary to get people to see things in a bigger and more profound way than they have and to do better work than they thought they could do.

When they do their best and you don't think it's good enough, you have to tell them straight.

This isn't good enough.

I know you can do better.

You need to do better.

Now go and do better.

Tell it to them straight.

This isn't good enough.

I know you can do better.

You need to do better.

Now go and do it.

So then we get into part three.

And this is about his return to Apple up until his death, unfortunately.

And again, we have Leslie Berlin.

This is a fantastic job and, you know, very short, you know, a handful of paragraphs here.

Just giving us a brief overview of what's to come.

The Apple that Steve returned to after its purchase of Next at the end of 1996 didn't resemble the company he remembered.

Apple had lost \$800 million that year.

But he also found many employees whose talents and love for Apple struck him as phenomenal.

There's something here worth saving, he said.

Steve remained driven by the same mission he had to articulate in his early years to put something back into the pool of human experience.

And his years away, look, now this is crazy.

And I had known this, but I never thought about this.

Like, I never, it was never articulated.

But if you think about it, it's like his years away were longer than his first time at the company.

That's crazy.

And in his years away, longer than his first time at the company, he had matured and learned how to lead.

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He saw his job as number one recruit.
Number two, to set an overall direction and number three, to inspire and control and persuade.
He gave particular thought to his, oh, this is fascinating too.
He gave particular thought to his responsibility for the business aspects of a creative company.
He has this combination that's really interesting.
And so he says, you need a risk taking creative environment on the product side.
And that requires a fiscally conservative environment on the business side.
So on the product side, risk taking creative environment, combined with a fiscally conservative environment on the business side.
His second tenure at Apple was a study in focus.
Soon after he returned, he slashed the company's product offerings from 17 to 4.
This upset some fans and led to thousands of job losses.
But he was unwavering in his belief that it was necessary to save the company.
You've got to choose where you put your love into really carefully, he said.
A stream of breakthroughs, including the iMac, OSX, iPod, iTunes, iPhone and iPad, reflected that focused love.
As did Pixar's blockbuster and award-winning films from the same period.
Apple's technology offered tools to make something wonderful and Pixar films, he believed, had the rare opportunity to put stories into the culture.
Stories that would speak to our grandkids, grandkids, grandkids.
Steve wanted to build a foundation for Pixar and Apple that would last beyond his lifetime.
We know from our vantage point that he definitely did.
The engine driving these transformations was a remarkably consistent set of values that Steve held dear.
Life is short, don't waste it.
Tell the truth, technology should enhance human creativity, process matters, beauty matters, details matter.
The world we know is a human creation and we can push it forward.
A few years later, in 2003, he goes and speaks to the Stanford Business School students and he actually is telling us, he's recalling the internal struggle and I've heard him speak about this and write about this in a few different ways.
This is very fascinating because it gives you some background to how he saw this taking place and this is about six years after he made this decision.
He says, I was working at Next, working at Pixar, reading the rumors in the papers that Apple is going to buy a company and then they'll buy this company for their operating system and one of our guys said, we should sell next to them.
We've got a much better operating system and I said, forget it, it'll never happen.
So this is one of those cases where you hire the right people, they don't always listen to you in key moments in time.
So this person being very smart didn't listen to me and he went over and talked to Apple and said, you ought to buy Next and they were interested and then he comes back and says, they want to talk to us
and I was like, no way, go away, you're making this up.

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He did this twice, finally said, okay, fine, let's talk to them.

I couldn't believe it.

They really were interested and so we ended up selling them Next.

And after that, I was pretty much out of the picture.

Then one of Apple's board members called me.

I had never met this person and he said, look, I want your straight scoop on what you think of the CEO here.

And I thought, I don't even know this person.

Whatever I tell them, they'll probably go tell the CEO and then I'll be persona non grata and I will not have a chance to help my team not get crushed by these other folks there.

And I thought a lot and then I thought, you know, this is a director of a company that I started and that I love for many years and still do.

And so how can I not tell them the truth?

So I spilled my guts and I never heard from him again.

And so I figured fine, I was spending my days at Pixar and having a great time.

It was spring time going into summer and six years ago, a few weeks from now,

I got a call back from him, the director and he said, we're going to dismiss our CEO and we would like you to come back and run the company.

And I said, I can't do that.

I'm the CEO of Pixar.

And so what Steve's talking about there, he wasn't sure that it was even legal to be the CEO of two public company CEOs at the time.

And so he says, I'll help you anyway, I can, but I can't do that.

He called back a few days later and said, we'd like you to come back as interim leader and help us find a new CEO.

And I said, well, I have to think about that.

And I was thinking about it and I called up a friend of mine, a really smart guy.

So he doesn't name him here.

I know from other books, this is Andy Grove.

So he says, I called up a friend of mine, a really smart guy, a good friend I'd known for a long time that worked at another company in the industry.

And I probably woke him up in the morning and I was telling him about my struggles about should I do this or could I do this or should I not?

And this and that.

And finally he interrupted me and he said, Steve, I don't give a shit about Apple.

And then this was hilarious because when I read this previously, if you really read between the lines like Steve is giving you and I a blueprint onto what to work on, you ask yourself, what do I give a shit about?

And then you go and do that because that's what he did.

And so he says that finally you interrupted me and he said, Steve, I don't give a shit about Apple.

And then I realized, you know, I do give a shit about Apple.

And that's kind of what crystallized it for me.

And so I went back there as interim CEO.

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And I decided right up front that I was going to act like I was the permanent CEO.
And so once he's back at Apple, we see these emails again from the Sejo's archive of what's happening.
And Avi Tavanian, I actually went to YouTube to make sure I pronounced his name correctly.
There's this exchange between Avi Tavanian and Steve.
And he had run software engineering at Next.
And so he comes back and he assumes the same role as Apple when it acquired Next.
He told Steve that the Apple culture at the time of the acquisition was so bad that, you know, we should just sell the company.
And I think Steve's response, his email back is excellent because it tells you like his mindset.
Like there's no way in hell Steve is going to sell Apple.
So it says, you know, I had the same feeling lately that Apple employees don't deserve to be saved.
They think they work so hard.
Heck, I don't see it.
They also think that they have no responsibility for any of the mess that Apple's in.
I don't think, this part made me laugh the first time I read it.
I don't know who they think engineered and shipped such bad products.
Who created and authorized such bad marketing?
Who caused the support to be so bad?
They just don't want to share any responsibility for the current state of the company.
But I just love that idea.
I was like, who do they think perform so poorly?
Again, insight to human nature.
They're never going to think that it's them.
But there is something good here worth saving.
I don't quite know how to express it, but it has to do with the fact that Apple is the only alternative to Windows
and that Apple can still inject some new thinking into the equation.
And he also includes in the email to Avi that something we mentioned earlier is like, I don't care about being right.
I just want to be excellent.
Please continue to challenge me.
It's the way we get to the right decisions and I enjoy it.
And so then there's this speech to Apple employees.
And you can actually see this on YouTube too, but it's included that the part of the transcript is included in the book.
And it really just like lays out like explaining to him, like, why am I doing all the things that I'm doing?
Right? People have to know why.
He says, I've been back about eight to 10 weeks and we've been working really hard.
What we're trying to do is not do something really highfalutin.
We're trying to get back to the basics.
We're trying to get back to the basics of great products, great marketing and great distribution.

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So to that end, he says, we started with the product line.
We looked at the product roadmap going out a few years and we said, a lot of this doesn't make sense.
And it's way too much stuff and there's not enough focus.
We actually got rid of 70% of the stuff on the product roadmap.
I couldn't even figure out the damn product line after a few weeks.
I kept saying, what is this model?
How does this fit?
I started talking to customers and they couldn't figure it out either.
You're going to see the product line get much simpler and you're going to see the product line get much better.
And so his advice to you and I is focus on the gems.
Just get rid of all the crap.
We've been able to focus a lot more on the 30% of the gems, not the 70% of the stuff that was distracting us.
So that's the product line.
Then he talks about that.
We have not kept up in innovations in our distribution.
Now crazy this.
So the crazy thing about that, right?
We know what's going to happen in the future.
Steve, when he said that did not know that we have not all he knew is that we're not we're not doing well in distribution.
This is not only they didn't have their own retail stores.
They weren't selling direct on their website yet either.
And so that's two major things that he's going to change.
Let's go back to the marketing.
To me, marketing is about values.
This is a very complicated world.
It is a very noisy world.
I can't tell you how many times I have read this paragraph like because I had notes on this talk for a long time.
I don't know 50 times because what he says here is so important.
To me, marketing is about values.
This is a very complicated world.
It's a very noisy world.
And we're not going to get a chance to get people to remember much about us.
No company is.
And so we have to be really clear on what we want them to know about us.
Now Apple, fortunately, is one of the half a dozen best brands in the entire world.
It's right up there with Nike, Disney, Coke, Sony.
It is one of the great of the greats.
But even a great brand needs investment and caring if it's going to retain its relevance and vitality.

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And the way to do that is not to talk about speeds and feeds.
And so this is where he says, hey, look at the job Nike does on marketing.
We're going to do that, but we're going to do it for computers.
The best example of all one of the greatest jobs of marketing that the universe has ever seen is Nike.
Remember, Nike sells a commodity.
They sell shoes.
And when you think of Nike, you feel something different than a shoe company.
In their ads, as you know, they don't ever talk about the products.
They don't ever tell you about their air soles or why they're better than Reeboks.
What does Nike do in their advertising?
They honor great athletes and they honor great athletics.
That's who they are.
That is what they're about.
And so he begins asking like, what is our core value?
What are we about?
The question we asked was our customers want to know who is Apple and what do we stand for?
Where do we fit in this world?
And what we're about isn't making boxes for people to get their jobs done, although we do that well.
We do that better than almost anybody in some cases, but Apple is about something more than that.
Apple at its core, its core value is that we believe that people with passion can change the world for the better.
That is what we believe and we believe that in this world, people can change it for the better
and that those people that are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones that
actually do.
And so we were going to communicate this.
And so he's referencing the Think Different ad campaign.
You can see the entire ad campaign on YouTube if you want.
It starts out here's to the crazy ones, the misfits, the rebels.
And so he's describing this before he plays it for the Apple employees.
It honors those people who have changed the world.
Some of them are living, some of them are not.
But the ones that aren't, you know that if they ever used a computer, it would have been a Mac.
So after he gives this speech, this is something I haven't come across in other books before.
There's actually a protest.
That's a good sign that people actually care about what you're doing, right?
That the opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference.
And so he cancels the Newton product line and people rebel so much that they show it at Apple to
give a protest, right?
And what he does is so smart.
This is Steve's response to customer protest and we know this because of this email that he sent.
And he says, some people are understandably upset that Apple has decided to stop developing future
Newton based computers.
Today, some of them are coming to Apple to protest our decision.

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This is okay.

We are reserving a space for them on our campus and we will provide them with coffee and other hot drinks.

Artists, it may be cold out there.

Our decision to end Newton development was not taken lightly and it is unlikely to be reversed.

Even so, let's welcome the Newton customers and developers who come to protest this decision.

Hopefully, they will feel our enthusiasm about the future of Apple and leave more settled than when they arrived.

And so in about a year, he raised Apple's market cap to \$4 billion from \$1.8 billion.

And so he talks about all the different things on how he got there.

But what I found this fascinating is like an insight to human nature.

People are never going to be satisfied.

And so he puts a framework on this.

He calls it Apple's hierarchy of skepticism.

And as the basis of this, he uses Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

And so he says, once you fix something, people are always going to find something else to complain about.

So he goes, when I came to Apple a year ago, all I heard is Apple is dying.

Apple can't survive.

And it turns out that every time we convince people that we've accomplished something at one level, they come up with something new.

I used to think this was a bad thing.

I thought, oh, geez, what are they ever going to believe that we're going to be able to turn this thing around?

But actually, now I think it's great because what it means is we've now convinced them that we've taken care of last month's question and they're on to the next one.

So I thought, well, let's get to the head of the game and let's try to figure out what all the questions are going to be and map out where we are.

So that's what the Apple hierarchy of skepticism is.

And so he takes it piece by piece.

He says on the first level, what we accounted a year ago was survival.

So what did we do?

We did many things, but the three things that stood out in people's minds were we brought a new management to run the company, a new board of directors that got some phenomenally experienced people on it.

And we did a deal with Microsoft, the largest software company in the world, wanting to help Apple was a fact that didn't escape very many people.

And it added a lot of credibility to what we were doing.

The combination of these three things and a lot of other medium sized things convinced people fairly rapidly that survival, at least in the short term, was not an issue.

So what is the response?

Immediately after we did this, then everybody moved up a level.

Now it wasn't about survival.

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It was, well, there's no stable business in the Mac market.

That was the next level of the hierarchy.

So we had to start demonstrating that we had a stable business and that one could be made from the Macintosh market because it's a great market.

So what did we do?

Well, the most important thing was profits.

Apple delivered profits of \$47 million in the next quarter and then delivered a quarter, the quarter after that of \$55 million in profits.

We also realigned our distribution channels and we began an advertising campaign for our brand around ThinkDifferent.

We invested in an online store.

We are now one of the largest e-commerce sites now on the internet.

So the aggregate of all these things was that the market value of Apple has risen from \$1.8 billion a year ago to about \$4 billion yesterday.

So what did people do then?

Well, they don't send us a card or anything.

They just go on to the next thing.

What's the next one?

Well, if you survived and you've got a stable business, well, what's your product strategy?

You're a product driven company.

You better have a doggone good product strategy, they said.

And so this goes back to his idea.

He's like, okay, we cut everything, his famous like four product matrix, the Apple matrix.

And he says, okay, what this told us is that if we had four great products, that's all we need.

And as a matter of fact, if we only had four, we could put the A team on every single one.

And so one of this innovation that he's talking about, he's given the speech at Macworld was the introduction of the iMac.

And so that's what he talks about.

Next, we immediately began a program to build the most kick-ass consumer product we knew how to do.

And that's the iMac.

And we're really, really happy with this thing.

It's gorgeous.

We believe it's going to change the way computers look and should look.

And so he goes, okay, so now what?

What more could you ask for?

Well, there's always something right.

The last one is growth.

Well, if all this stuff's so good, show me some growth.

How are you going to grow?

And this is his point of differentiation is like the growth is going to come from building great products that consumers want.

And he didn't know how right he was at this point, right?

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But he says Apple had declined rapidly in the consumer market.
A market that he had had invented.
Apple invented the market for selling computers to consumers.
And yet he failed to come out with compelling products at consumer price points.
So he is saying that is the next level that he's focused on now.
We began a program to get back into the consumer market with a vengeance.
And this is where we see a tremendous amount of growth for ourselves.
Think about how crazy it is, right?
He's saying this, this consumer market, we're going to get it back in there with a vengeance.
This is where we're going to see a tremendous amount of growth for ourselves.
He's saying that in 1998.
There's no such thing as an iPad.
No such thing as an iPhone.
No such thing as an iPod yet.
And so what I think might be my favorite parts of this entire book is there are several sections called email from Steve to himself.
He does this quite a bit.
It says why.
Steve often captures his thoughts by emailing himself notes.
And the reason it's important is because obviously every email is time and date stamped.
And so you can see like the evolution of his thinking.
Like a lot of the same ideas, you see like little seeds of them and then they grow and then they maybe combine with other ideas.
And so he sends an email to himself in the year 2000, like what is Apple's reason for being?
And so I just want to pull out a couple of highlights that he was thinking in 2000.
Apple is the world's premier company of building high technology products that are easy to learn and used by mere mortals.
Beginning over 20 years ago, Apple has consistently set the standard for easy to use computer systems and software.
Why?
Why do we do this?
Because we're in love with the potential of personal computers to enhance and enrich the lives of regular people, not just with spreadsheets and databases, but with creative.
We are a creatively driven company in everything we do.
Apple marries state of the art technology with Apple's legendary ease of use to create products that enable users to do more.
Apple is the world's, this is the way you think about, like, think about what he's saying here, right?
So far it's like, okay, where are you going with this?
He really summarizes the way he thinks about Apple at this point.
Apple is the world's premier bridge builder between mere mortals and the exploding world of high technology.
Demystified technology.
It will have a much greater impact than any other thing we can do.

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And then we have another email that Steve sends to all Apple employees.

This one happens in 2002, and it's actually on his all-time favorite quote, and it's this quote from Aristotle.

And Aristotle said, we are what we repeatedly do.

Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.

That was sent in 2002.

A few years later, he's giving this interview.

I think in like 60 minutes or something like that.

And I think it's right around the release of the iPhone.

And the interviewer is saying, you know, you're going to go down one of the greatest inventors and innovators in American history.

How do you think about that?

And Steve said something that I think is echoing what Aristotle said.

And Steve said, I think if you do something and it turns out pretty good, then you should just go do something else wonderful.

Not dwell on it for too long.

Just figure out what's next.

And if you take these two quotes and you think about them in context of Steve's own career, it's like he didn't do the Apple too.

The Apple too is one of the greatest products ever created, right?

He didn't stop there.

Then he made the Macintosh.

Then he just kept going.

Then he found, helped found Pixar.

Then, you know, he does the iPod, the iPhone, the iPad, iMac, all these other fantastic products.

And I think he has that in common with a lot of the people that they write biographies on.

They don't do just one great thing.

Or if they do one great thing, they do that one great thing for decades after decades.

So I like that idea.

It's like we are what we repeatedly do.

Aristotle didn't say, we're great if we do one great thing.

It's like, no, excellence then is not an act, but it's a habit.

It's a lifelong habit.

And then the book republishes this interview that he did actually with Leslie Berlin, who's the one doing a bunch of the introductions and like the editing of this book.

And she interviewed Steve back in 2003.

And this, again, I talked about this last week when I talked about the fact that I had lunch with Sam Zell over two hours.

There's not one thing I could tell that guy about entrepreneur or business history he didn't already know.

I told you I came back and I was like, I want that.

It was reassurance that I was on the right path.

We're going to go over this interview.

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This is something I've known about Steve forever.

I think I mapped out, you know, between all the podcasts I've done and then all the podcasts I did based on Steve's influences.

I should really, really reprint this bonus episode I did, a republish it.

I've done like 39 or 40 different episodes just trying to map out who Steve Jobs was.

And then going deep on the people, like all the people he just randomly mentions that he studied and he inspired and I'd go and read their book.

He's right.

And so I guess what I'm saying is like, I read reread this interview.

In the interview, Steve is going to talk about one of his mentors, which is Bob Noyce, the founder of Intel.

You'll recognize him because I covered him all the way back on episode 166.

He's got a biography called The Man Behind the Microchip, Robert Noyce and the invention of Silicon Valley, if you want to read that book or listen to that episode.

But the reason this is so important to me and I spent so much time in this actual, this one interview is the fact that I think it's obvious that if Steve Jobs was young and still building his career today, like he would listen to founders, listen to what he talks about in this interview.

So this is the introduction.

In May 2003, Steve spoke with Leslie Berlin about his mentor, Robert Noyce.

Noyce co-invented the microchip and co-founded Intel and Fairchild Semiconductor, the first successful Silicon microchip company in Silicon Valley.

And so then he begins to speak about how important his relationship that he built with Bob. Steve was a young man.

Listen to this.

He says, I was young, I was in my late 20s and Bob, well, gosh, he must have been in his later 40s. Leslie hops in, she says he was born in 27, in 1927.

And so Steve says, yeah, I was born in 1955, so he was almost 30 years older than me.

Yeah, so he was well, he was in his early 50s, meaning he was in his early 50s when he started to mentor young Steve Jobs.

And now that I'm approaching, this is the, I love this because we think about the full scope of human, the full spectrum of like your human lifetime, right?

Like if you think of like, what did you think when you were 20s?

What did you think when you were 30s?

And now this is Steve talking when he's in this almost, almost 50.

He's like the difference of what he thought when he was 20, what he did not know and what Bob was trying to teach him.

So he says, and now that I'm approaching 50, it's easy to see how people in their 50s know more than people in their 20s.

He just kind of tried to give me the lay of the land and tried to give me a perspective that I could only partially understand.

Meaning only partially understand when he's 20.

There's no, some of the stuff like, you know, I've had this happen in my own life.

Older people, older, wiser people try to tell you something like, yeah, yeah, yeah, that's fine for you.

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And then you realize something happens in your life, you experience and then that's where you learn the lesson.

You're like, damn it.

That person was right.

And this is what I love about Charlie Munger and Warren Buffett.

They keep repeating, so few people are capable of learning from the experience of others.

And Warren and Charlie, like we just happen to be able to be some of those few people that can actually learn from the experience of others.

And life is a lot better and easier if you can do that.

So I think there's an echo of what Steve's telling us here.

So it's like he was giving me a perspective that can only partially understand at that time.

I think he was interested in what someone in their 20s thought too.

And he was fascinated by the personal computer.

The personal computer and Intel had nothing to do with each other at the time.

So he was fascinated by that stuff.

That was it.

So we just became buddies and there's something that Bob says in his, in that biography.

Where he says something, I think the line, I don't have it in front of me, so I'm going off memory.

It's something like he, the reason he spent so much time, much time mentoring and then investing in young entrepreneurs.

It says something like I wanted to restock the fish, the stream.

I wanted to restock the stream I fish from.

Like I benefited.

He talked to, in his, you know, studying deeply, David Packard and Bill Hewlett, among other people.

And he's like, well, you know, these people are so helpful for me.

All these people helped me in my career.

Like now that I'm, you know, he's wealthy and well known, his company successful.

It's like I have an obligation, very similar to what Sam's also last week.

You know, I was like, well, Sam, why are you doing this?

Like, why are you flying all over the world at your expense?

Given these speeches, you know, he could be doing whatever he wants.

He could be on an island.

He could buy an island and just be fed grapes all day.

He was like, I don't want to do that.

That's not interesting to me.

I have an, he, that's what the word he uses.

Like I have an obligation.

I consider an obligation to pass on what he learned.

That guy's been an entrepreneur for 61 years.

How many people on the planet can say that they've been an entrepreneur for 61 years?

There's some of them.

There's a small group of people.

Imagine the knowledge that's in this guy's brain and what does he do?

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He goes to travel all around the world at his expense, sharing his wisdom and his love of entrepreneurship with other people.
That is, I want to freaking scream.
And you know, that's not the word I was about to say.
So I just love this.
I just love this idea that we see this over and over again where it's just like, man, I have an obligation.
Like Bob Noy said it, you know, Bob Noy's has been dead for 30 something years.
And yet that same theme, that same, whatever you want to call it, that same idea is still alive today.
I just absolutely love it.
So let's go back to this, this interview.
And so Leslie saying, one of my favorite quotes from Bob is where he says that optimism is a central greeting for innovation.
And so this is what Steve says.
Well, it's optimism and passion because it's really hard.
And if you don't really, really care about what you're doing, you're going to give up if you're a sane person because it's super hard.
And I'm sure it was extremely hard for him at times.
This is 2003 Steve Jobs.
Remember that?
It's optimism and passion because it's really hard.
If you don't really, really, really care about what you're doing, you're going to give up because you're sane if you're a sane person.
Obviously people like Steve Jobs, people like Bob Noy's, people like you and I, I don't think people, to the average person that are going to think people like us are sane.
You know, I told this story where I was telling my dad that I got to meet Sam and like, you know, this guy sold his company for \$38 billion, 81 years old still, still at it every day, still like enthusiastic.
And you know, he didn't understand.
He's like, why?
Because to him, work is drudgery, work is something that you have to do, where it's like entrepreneurs, people like you and I and Steve and Bob.
It's like, no, no, no, it's like, we have to do it because it's part of our personality, but there's no separation between our life and our work.
There is no, oh, I have an X amount of dollars.
I'm just going to sit on my ass and do nothing all day.
That's not going to happen.
So then Steve goes back on the importance of asking older, more experienced entrepreneurs for help.
I called him, meaning Bob Noy's and Andy Grove, and a few other people.
I called Jerry Sanders, who was the founder of the microchip company AMD.
I just called him up and said, look, I'm young and I'm trying to run this, I'm trying to run with this company.

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He's talking about when he was in his early 20s.

Okay.

I'm trying to run this company.

I'm just wondering if I could buy you lunch once a quarter and pick your brain.

And everybody I asked said yes.

It was nice.

Bob said yes.

Andy Grove said yes.

That's how I met Andy.

Jerry Sanders said yes.

It was pretty wonderful.

I was very, very lucky because I got to meet and get to know a little bit of Hewlett, Bill Hewlett and David Packard too.

So this idea, go back to what we just talked about a little while ago, where Andy Grove is like schooling them.

It's like, hey, we weren't entering into a commercial relationship.

Part of being friends and helping each other is I'm going to tell you everything I know.

You're going to tell me everything you know.

And then it's just going to balance out in the end.

And then Steve reflects.

He's like, okay, thank you.

And I've changed my perspective.

I'll do whatever I can help.

Hope.

That idea, that relationship they built over multiple decades.

He meets Andy Grove when he's in his early 20s.

He's still talking to him 20 years later.

I think Steve was around 40 years old when that email exchange was happening.

And this is something Steve would repeat throughout his entire career.

It's shared on our past podcast where he feels asking for help as a superpower.

A superpower no one uses.

He goes a little bit into that here.

I think I got lucky and had the Hootspa to call these guys up.

There's a tradition here in Silicon Valley and many people don't spend time to learn about it.

Some people, but some people like himself, get curious as to what came before them.

Leslie says, why does that sense of connection matter?

Why is it so important to you?

Listen to this.

This is Steve is so, I don't even know poetic is the right word.

There's just a passion to everything he does.

You could tell you that truly gives a shit about what he's doing.

And so Steve says, there's a human drama to most everything.

You look at it sometimes and it seems dry as history.

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But if you peel the onion, there's humanity underneath.

Right?

How many times do you and I go over these biographies?

It's not just about the amazing career they built, the amazing business they built.

There's times where bad things happen to their family.

There's health issues.

There's all this struggle going on.

Like you're peeling the onion and you realize there's humanity underneath that you and I can relate to

because we all go through the same shit.

Just to understand what's going on now, you can't really do that unless you understand how it got here.

There's a great quote by Schopenhauer.

It's a great quote.

I should pull this up.

If I get it all wrong, I've got to go and get it.

So he loves it so much, goes upstairs, grabs Schopenhauer's book on the suffering of the world and then reads it to Leslie.

He who lives to see two or three generations is like a man who sits some time in the conjurer's booth at a fair

and witnesses the performance twice or thrice in succession.

The tricks were meant to be seen only once.

And when they are no longer a novelty and cease to deceive, their effect is gone.

And so a few years before he gives this legendary commencement address that's been viewed tens of millions of times,

probably 100 million times by now, at Stanford,

he talks to the actual MBA students, the graduate school of business students there, a few years before.

And so he's going over just some ideas or things that he's working on.

This is 2003 in Apple.

And this is very important, something he says.

At the same time as reading this book, I was rereading James Dyson's autobiography, which is going to be the next episode.

And him and Steve and James pick up on the exact same thing.

So he says, if Apple comes up with a dozen innovations in a year, we can maybe advertise four or five of them.

We can't advertise more than that because even if we had all the money in the world, the customer would get very confused with all these messages coming at them.

James in his autobiography says, you simply cannot mix your messages when selling something new.

A consumer can barely handle one great new idea, let alone two or even several.

So that's on the product side and the advertising side.

Then he talks about the distribution side.

This is the Apple store.

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And he says that we're going to ambush our customers.

This is just hilarious.

So he says, our goal in retail was not just to sell to the 5% of people who own our products today. It was to go for the other 95%.

And we decided that these other 95% would not drive 10 miles to look in an Apple store if they weren't at all interested in buying our products.

And you know they're not interested because they ambush your products.

So we decided we had to ambush them.

That's a great word that he's using there.

We had to ambush them.

What that meant is that we had to go to high traffic locations and put stores there.

The customers don't have to take a risk of driving 10 miles to find out that they weren't interested.

They just had to take the risk of walking 10 feet.

And then he's going to repeat something that he started talking about 25 years before.

This talk that he's giving at Stanford Graduate School of Business.

The fact that everything comes down to the people.

Everything comes down to the quality people that you work with, the quality people that you have in your life.

There's a huge variance in the quality people.

You probably don't experience that.

And so you have to go for great.

That's been the most important lesson that I've learned in business.

That the dynamic range of people dramatically exceeds things you encounter in the rest of our normal lives.

And to try to find those really great people who really, really love what they do.

And there's also an element that their missionaries don't have mercenaries and he's talking about this.

He's like, listen, when I returned to Apple in 1997, so that'd be six years before he's talking about this.

The individual contributors were phenomenal.

The individual contributors, right?

He thought the management and the overall company culture was terrible.

Obviously, you and I talked about this when we went over Johnny Ives' excellent biography.

And so I'm sure Johnny's one of these people and he says, I asked a lot of these guys, why did you stay?

And they said, because we bleed six colors.

I heard that from a lot of people.

There were six colors in the old Apple logo.

So I bleed Apple colors, right?

It was management that was a problem.

So we actually got rid of most of the management team and promoted a lot of these young people into management positions.

This is Steve's very unique perspective on management.

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And what I found is that nobody in their right mind wants to be a manager.
It's true.
It's a lot of work and you don't get to do the fun stuff.
But the only good reason to be a manager is so some other bozo doesn't be the manager and ruin the group that you care about.
And so he continues about management.
And this is why I think people love Steve.
They just love people that are unfiltered, that we all think this, but no one talks about it.
We all play this like this fake game with this jargon and pretend like we're not all humans underneath.
And so what do you talk about?
I study management in school.
Like, you know, it's just, I agree with what he's saying here.
It's basically what I'm saying.
There's a lot of management techniques.
It's all croc.
And a really smart guy I met a long time ago who used to teach at Disney University.
Walt Disney himself recruited this guy to run Disney universally.
Told me about his point of view.
Steve has what, 30 years of three decades of experience running companies at this point.
And he's like, but I like what this guy that ran Disney University actually said.
And he says he called it management by values.
What that means is you find people that want the same things you want.
And so he's going to tell this in an analogy.
We're all going to take a trip together.
The first thing is to figure out where we all want to go.
The worst thing is if we all decide we want to go to different places, you can never manage it.
This guy wants to go to New Orleans.
You want to go somewhere else.
I want to go to San Francisco.
You want to go to San Diego.
That doesn't work.
But if we all say we all want to go to San Diego, that's the key.
Then we can argue about how to get there.
You think it's better to take a plane.
You think it's better to take a train.
We'll figure that part out because if I say I want to take a train to San Diego and somebody says, that's really stupid.
It'll take three days.
We can fly and be there in an hour.
I'll go, oh, okay, because actually I want to go to San Diego.
So if I can get there in an hour flying, I'll ditch my idea about the train.
That's what management by values is.

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It's finding people with passion.

There's that word again.

It's finding people with passion that want to go to San Diego who want to go to the same place you want to go.

That is the key.

And then he goes into, okay, now we have agreed to where we want to go.

How do we do that?

And his whole point is you figure it out along the way.

That's what you get paid to do, right?

So if you want to preserve something, what you want to do is have a good enough place to go.

That's got a long enough focal length that it will survive over time that everybody agrees on and not codify how you're going to get there.

And that's one of my mantras around Apple and Pixar, right?

Because the people that you recruit, everything like this is what we just talked about.

Everything with Steve is going to come back to the quality of the people that you have around you.

And that's one of my mantras around Apple and Pixar.

That recruiting is the most important thing that you do.

Finding the right people that is half the battle.

And so based on my understanding of Steve through all this reading, I think the person that was most influential on how he managed when he came back to Apple was actually the time he spent with Ed Katmell.

Seeing how Ed Katmell actually ran Pixar.

And Ed says something over and over again in his autobiography Creativity Inc. about this.

It's very similar to what Steve's saying here.

If you give a good idea to a mediocre team, they will screw it up.

If you give a mediocre idea to a brilliant team, they will either fix it or throw it away and come up with something better.

And so I think that adds context into why Steve keeps repeating that recruiting is the most important thing that you do.

Finding the right people is half the battle.

And so then we go back to this idea that Steve loved to email himself all these notes and kind of document what he's thinking.

And so there's this actually longer part of the book that's multiple emails of him over a length of time drafting the legendary Stanford commencement address.

And so we can see as you read through the emails.

And again, this book is available for free.

You can read it online or download it.

I don't understand why you wouldn't.

You can actually see like the evolution of his thinking or like how these ideas, like he writes into himself and then like how they change in the final draft.

And then how they change when he actually delivered the address, which I thought was interesting.

But I just want to pull out a couple of things here.

This was excellent because he says that the world we live in is a circus world and you never know

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what's around the next corner, which I thought was a great line.
And so that obviously can be negative and positive events.
But this was an extremely positive event in his life.
This is when he meets his wife.
So he's emailing himself these notes that he wants to write a talk about at the commencement address.
And this subject to himself was that you can't plan to meet the people who will change your life.
And so this is the note to himself that he's going to eventually share a variation of this with those graduating students.
You can't plan to meet the people who will change your life.
I was invited to speak at Stanford's Business School a few times a year and I always try to do it.
I had accepted an invitation to speak one Thursday late in the afternoon and I wasn't feeling very well.
And I had a dinner late that evening with some important customers.
But he decides anyways to go.
So he's like, oh, it doesn't matter.
I said, I was going to do this.
I'll do this.
He says, it didn't take me long to notice this really cute girl sitting next to me.
I think she was stunned when it was me that got up to speak.
And I knew something was up when I was staring at her, forgetting what I was talking about mid sentence.
After my talk, I stayed around to speak with some students and then she stayed too.
But then she left and I didn't know who she was and I thought I might never see her again.
So I wound things up and left and caught up with her in the parking lot.
I asked her if she would have dinner with me on Saturday.
She said yes and gave me her phone number.
As I was walking to my car, this is one of my favorite things he ever did.
And he says, as I was walking to my car, I asked myself, if this was the last day of my life, would I rather have dinner with the important customers or her?
I raced back to her car just as she was about to drive off and asked her, how about dinner tonight?
She said, sure.
And we were married 18 months later.
You can't plan to meet the people who will change your life.
It just happens.
Maybe it's random.
Maybe it's fate.
Either way, you can't plan for it.
But you want to recognize when it happens and have the courage and clarity of mind to grab onto it.
So then another email.
He's, you know, recounting the lessons that he's learned from his life that he's trying to organize for the benefit of, you know, not only the people that are in the audience now, the tens of millions of people around the world that have watched that commencement address.

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And so we see this evolution again.

And this is just absolutely fantastic because I'm not sure if I should read the highlight first.

Let me read the highlight first and then my note because that's the order that, that, that this happened for me.

And so he's talking about starting Apple.

And he says, when my partner Steve Woznyanek and I started Apple, most of our friends in our family told us we were nuts.

Woz had a great job designing handheld calculators at Hewlett Packard and I had a fun job designing games at Atari.

And we were giving them up to start this company.

I remember talking to Woz and saying, hey, we may fail, but we have no responsibility now.

No wives, no kids, no house payments, nothing.

If we don't do this now, we never will.

We have nothing to lose.

The worst thing is we'll get out of this or excuse me, the worst thing we'll get out of this is that we'll have memories of having gone for it.

To give ourselves the experience of participating in what Bill Hewlett and David Packard did to start a company.

So rather than invest in better cars or better apartments or our bank accounts, we decided to invest in ourselves.

And so when I read this section, this is the first thing.

Again, like when I'm reading, I think I've told you this before, but I just read whatever when I'm reading books, whatever pops out.

I'm like, I want to remember, I just highlight.

I don't sit and like contemplate it.

It's just all instinct.

Like, oh, this is interesting.

I want to remember this.

And then immediately I write down the first thing that pops to mind.

You can never predict when you hear a line, you know, on a podcast or you read it in a book or hear it in a movie.

Like what, that's like a prompt for your thinking, right?

This paragraph that I just read prompted this thought.

One thing that reading biographies of dead people will do for you.

It will remove the illusion that you have something to lose.

If you want to design calculators at HP, then do that.

But if what you really want to do is to try to start a company, you're making a giant mistake playing it safe.

Everything is temporary.

There is no such thing as safety.

Then we see another email that he drafts for himself for the commencement address.

This is another one of my favorite ideas and something that, you know, is going to happen when you become friends with the imminent dead.

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And it's important to obviously pick that up before, you know, we're one of them.
The most important thing I've ever encountered to help me make the big choices is to remember that I'll be dead soon.
I know it sounds a bit dramatic, but it's true.
And when I remember this, I realize that all the expectations and standards and restrictions of others and society mean nothing in the end.
I realize that I have nothing to lose by following my heart and my intuition, even if I embarrass myself, or I fail in the eyes of others.
Because I'll be dead soon.
And when I realize that I don't have forever to decide what my intuition tells me is waiting out there for me.
When I was 17, I read a quote that said something like, if you live each day as if it's your last, some day you'll most certainly be right.
And since I was 17, I have looked in the mirror every morning and asked myself, if today was the last day of my life, would I want to do what I'm about to do today?
It goes back to Ben Franklin's quote.
Time is the stuff life is made up.
That's all that matters.
We can, we get confused with prestige and money and expectations of others.
It doesn't matter.
Do I'm a very, my wife wouldn't agree with this, but I'm a very simple person.
And it says, it's like, I just try to design a day that I like.
Did I like what I did today?
And if I did, then let me do that again tomorrow.
And if I find work that I love to do and I do it every day and I do it over a long time, that means I'll get really good at it.
Right.
And then I'll be able to build value for other people and collect some of that value for myself.
So it's like very simple.
It's like 24 hours.
That's all.
I don't worry about five year plan, 10 year plan, 20 year plan.
It's like, can I, can I design a good 24 hours myself and then keep doing that day after day?
So it's very similar to what he's saying here.
If today was the last day of my life, would I want to do what I'm about to do today?
When the answer has been no for too many days in a row, I know I need to change something in my life.
Another way to think about this is that your life is a story.
It's hard to see yet when you're looking forward at 22, which is, you know, the intended audience for what he's writing here.
But imagine yourself as an old person looking back on your life.
Your life will be a story.
It will be your story with its highs and lows, its heroes and villains, its forks in the road that mean

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everything.

And if you can remember that your life is a story in the making, it will help you make important decisions.

And so then there's just a few things that I want to pull out from the actual commencement address at Stanford University.

There's something I actually save on my phone because I think what Steve's about to tell us here is very similar to this.

Like I did a podcast on Anthony Bourdain who, you know, I was a huge fan of.

I read his books.

I watched his, his shows.

I was devastated when he killed himself.

I'm actually reading another book with somebody work very closely to him because I thought Tony Bourdain's quality work was excellent.

And so reading this book, like hopefully I can learn and apply in some small way, like some lessons that Tony learned.

But there's something I heard Tony say one time that I save and I look at all my phone all the time.

And I try to use it as a, like a, just a way I think about my own work.

And he says, I admire people who do things that are interesting to them who don't have a strategy or master plan or have a brand.

I don't care about any of those things.

And what we're about to hear Steve talk about is he did things that were interesting to him.

You know, he trusted that, like if he just followed his own interests and his passion, which was, you know, making insanely great products, that it would work out in the end.

And we saw that when he was a very young man.

So he says, my biological mother was a young unwed graduate student and she decided to put me up for adoption.

She felt very strongly that I should be adopted by college graduates.

So everything was all set for me to be adopted at birth by a lawyer and his wife.

Except that when I popped out, they decided at the last minute that they really wanted a girl.

So my parents who were on a waiting list got a call in the middle of the night asking, we have an unexpected baby boy. Do you want him?

They said, of course, my biological mother found out later that my mother had never graduated from college and that my father had never graduated from high school.

She refused to sign the final adoption papers.

She only relented a few months later when my parents promised that I would go to college.

This was my start in life.

And 17 years later, I did go to college, but I naively chose a college that was almost as expensive as Stanford and all of my working class parents savings were but were being spent on my college tuition.

After six months, I couldn't see the value in it.

I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life and no idea how college was going to help me figure it out.

And here I was spending all the money that my parents had saved.

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So I decided to drop out and trust that it all worked out OK.
It was one of the best decisions I ever made.
It wasn't all romantic.
I didn't have a dorm room, so I slept on the floor in a friend's house.
I returned Coke bottles for five cent deposits to buy food.
And I would walk seven miles across town every Sunday night to get one good meal a week at the Harry Christianer Temple.
And so then he's talking about just following his interest.
He was interested in the time of taking a calligraphy class.
Remember, he's dropped out.
He's not a student.
He's just learning for the sake of learning, which obviously is way more important than learning for the sake of formal education.
None of this had even a hope of any practical application in my life.
But 10 years later, when we were designing the first Macintosh computer, it all came back to me and we designed it into the Mac.
It was the first computer with beautiful typography.
If I had never dropped in on that single course in college, the Mac would never have had multiple typefaces or proportionally spaced fonts.
And since Windows just copied the Mac, it's likely that no personal computer would have them either.
Again, you cannot connect the dots looking forward.
That's why I think following is something you're intensely interested in.
Like maneuver yourself into your work that you are intensely interested in and then do it for a long time.
That combination, like time carries most of the weight and the way you stay in something long is like you're intensely interested about it.
Steve was intensely interested in building products when he was like 19.
He was still intensely interested in it, doing the same thing when he was 50.
Again, that's why we're talking about it today.
Again, you can't connect the dots looking forward.
You can only connect them looking backwards.
So you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future.
You have to trust in something, your gut, your destiny, life, karma, whatever.
Because believing that the dots will somehow connect down the road will give you the confidence to follow your heart,
even when it leads you to off the well-worn path.
And that will make all of the difference.
And then later on in the speech, he goes back to this theme that like if you know that you're temporary,
everything that you think matters, people's opinions of you, none of that, none of it matters.
It's just like what do you want to do?
Your time is unlimited.

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Don't waste it living someone else's life is one of the best pieces of advice anybody could give you.
Sometimes life is going to hit you in the head with a brick. Don't lose faith.
I'm convinced that the only thing that kept me going after you got fired from Apple, and struggled for 12, 13 years, was that I loved what I did.
You've got to find what you love.
And that is as true for your work as it is for your lovers.
Your work is going to fill a large part of your life.
And the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work.
And the only way to do great work is to love what you do.
If you haven't found it yet, keep looking.
Don't settle.
As with all matters of the heart, you'll know when you find it.
And like any great relationship, it just keeps getting better and better as the years roll on.
So keep looking.
Don't settle.
Your time is limited.
Do not waste it living someone else's life.
Don't be trapped by dogma, which is living with the results of other people's thinking.
Don't let the noise of other opinions drown out your own inner voice.
And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition.
They somehow already know what you truly want to become.
Everything else is secondary.
This is fantastic.
I've never seen this before.
He gave a speech to Apple employees the day before the iPhone was released in 2007.
And this speaks to one of my favorite ideas about him.
And an idea I think you and I can use in our lives is that one of his talents was spotting markets filled with second rate products.
Same with James Dyson, right?
Which we'll cover next week.
And it wasn't...
So he's talking about the creation of wanting to have a phone.
It wasn't driven by a bunch of market research or financial spreadsheets about how big certain markets were.
It wasn't driven by that at all.
It was driven by the fact that we all hated our phones.
We talked to all of our friends and all the people we knew and they hated their phones too.
And we thought this is a really important device and everyone hates it.
They don't know how to use even 10% of the features that are on these phones.
We thought we could make a contribution by making something truly great that we loved.
And we've done it.
We love this thing and starting tomorrow at 6pm, we're going to find out if other people love it as much as we do.

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And think about that.

The most successful consumer product of all time came from just the fact that he was just building a product for himself.

A few pages later, they print out this joint interview that Steve Jobs, I think it's the last joint interview that Steve Jobs and Bill Gates gave.

And they're on stage together.

And really, I just want to pull this out because this jumped off the page too.

They're talking about what they like about each other after being like frenemies for multiple decades.

And Bill says, Steve gave a speech once, which is one of my favorites, where he talked about in a certain sense that we build the products that we want to use ourselves. And so he's really pursued that with incredible taste and elegance.

And that's had a huge impact on our industry.

And so the iPhone comes out.

Fortune magazine named Steve, CEO of the decade.

So Art Levison, who's the CEO of Genitech at the time and on Apple's board, sent Steve a congratulatory email.

Steve's response is perfect.

And it's, you can almost predict what his response is going to be based on what we've already talked about, right?

And his thing is like, you did something wonderful.

It's great.

Go do it again and do it again and do it again forever.

So this is from Art to Steve.

And he's, there's a line that he's quoting from the Fortune magazine article where they called him the Beethoven of business, the Beethoven of business.

Not sure it gets any better than that.

Congratulations.

Steve's response is four words.

All glory is fleeting.

And then a year before Steve dies, he sends an email to himself.

No subject, but one of the greatest things I've ever seen anybody write.

I grow little of the food I eat.

And of the little I do grow, I did not breed or perfect the seeds.

I do not make any of my own clothing.

I speak a language that I did not invent or refine.

I did not discover the mathematics I use.

I am protected by freedoms and laws I did not conceive of or legislate and do not enforce or adjudicate.

I am moved by music.

I did not create myself.

When I needed medical attention, I was helpless to help myself survive.

I did not invent the transistor, the microprocessor, object oriented programming or most of the

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technology I work with.

I love and admire my species, living and dead, and am totally dependent on them for my life and well-being.

And then the book ends with Steve's resignation letter from Apple a few weeks before he died.

To the Apple board of directors and the Apple community.

I have always said if there ever came a day where I could no longer meet my duties and expectations as Apple CEO, I would be the first to let you know.

Unfortunately, that day has come.

I hereby resign as CEO of Apple.

I would like to serve if the board sees fit as chairman of the board, director and Apple employee.

As far as my successor goes, I strongly recommend that we execute our succession plan and name Tim Cook as CEO of Apple.

I believe Apple's brightest and most innovative days are ahead of it, and I look forward to watching and contributing to its success in a new role.

I have made some of the best friends of my life at Apple, and I thank you all for the many years of being able to work alongside you.

Steve.

Becoming friends with the Eminent Dead is a reminder that our time here is limited.

We don't know how much time we have left.

We have to go for it.

For the full story, download the book for free.

You can go to stevejobsarchive.com.

I'll leave the links down below as usual.

You can read the book online, read on Apple books, download the file and actually send it to your Kindle, any other e-reader, whatever you want to do.

Highly, highly recommend it. It's a no-brainer that I cannot believe the gift that Steve Jobs Archive has just given to the world.

The fact that we have Steve in his own words talking directly to you and I.

Highly, highly recommend you read the entire thing.

And if you want to see my Top 10 Highlights from this book and every book that I read, you can join my email list.

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And I'll check you again soon.