

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / E227: Seth Rogen Opens Up About His Self-Doubt & Struggles That Nobody Sees!

Hey there, welcome.

Hey!

That's Logan!

Writer, producer, and actor you know from Pineapple Express, Knocked Up and Superbad.

The Club is here.

In Hollywood, it's not a fair industry.

It is not fair who makes it.

Any given phone call is one that is making your life or one that is yet another door slamming in your face.

We had finished Superbad.

And then we wrote Pineapple Express.

No one wanted to make it.

Boost.

But if you don't quit, you might make it.

People would obviously look at you and assume that you have zero self-doubt because you've been so successful in what you've done.

But what's your journey been with self-doubt?

I'm at the point, it's funny, my career were like, not a lot of people are in a position to like yell at me.

But I will have a cultural institution tell everyone that I suck.

That will add self-doubt.

Green Hornet.

You've received critical reviews for that.

Like, what's that phase like?

Any opening weekend, honestly, and any time I have a thing coming out, it sucks.

I think if most critics knew how much it hurt the people that they are writing about, they would second-guess the way they write these things.

Like, it's devastating.

And something that people carry with them literally their entire lives.

I read that you'd said,

you would find life really hard without marijuana.

I smoke weed all day.

And I've been very productive in that time.

I think that's what I've been missing.

Seth, you've had an incredible twisting, turning career.

And I have to say, when I was reading about your earliest years, an unexpected one, in many respects.

To me, too.

What do I need to know about you, where you came from, how you were raised to understand the man that you are?

I mean, that depends on your appetite, I guess.

I don't think anyone needs to know anything.

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But if you're curious, I don't know.

I mean, there's a lot.

I think a general, when I look at my life, I guess, I started young.

I think that's something that I kind of view as one of the defining traits and characteristics of my life.

And I think I've always worked very hard.

And I've always had very supportive parents.

And I think those things are things that when, if you're looking at, like, if you're curious about how I got to where I am from a career standpoint,

I think, and just like who I am as a person in a lot of ways,

I think those things were instrumental, yeah.

Your parents?

Yeah.

I was reading about them.

Yeah, they're very strange people, yeah.

How so?

I mean, everyone's parents are strange to them, I would imagine.

I would, yeah, they're just, they're kind of, you know, my dad's kind of eccentric.

My mother's also kind of eccentric.

You know, they, but again, they were very, they're both incredibly supportive.

I think because they're, I think a lot of, you know, my writing partner, Evan,

his parents were much less eccentric by kind of more traditional metrics and were much less supportive of his career in a lot of ways.

And so I probably benefited from their, you know, eccentricities more than anything.

Yeah.

Eccentric's a broad word.

Because I could describe my parents, specifically one of them is being eccentric.

Yeah.

When you say eccentric, what exactly do you mean?

I mean, my dad, well, my whole family, you know, I'm, you know, like a lot, my grandmother was like an immigrant who fled World War One.

A lot of Jewish families are defined by the fact that people have been trying to kill Jewish people for a very long time and my family is no different.

A lot of the reasons Jews live where they live and are where they are and not, you know, in, you know, Eastern Europe somewhere is because, you know, people are trying to kill them.

And that also shapes, I think, Jewish sensibility to a large degree.

I know it did mine because it's kind of informed by neurosis and trauma to a large degree.

And so yeah, my grandmother is an immigrant and she met my grandfather

who his parents were immigrants to Winnipeg, which is a very cold, unforgiving part of Canada.

They moved to Vancouver ultimately and had my mother and my mother wanted to go to Israel to travel.

My dad's from Newark, New Jersey, which is like, especially where he's from, like one of the worst parts of America from like a kind of crime standpoint,

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especially at that time in the 70s and 80s.

And he, my dad's like, you know, a socialist and moved to a kibbutz in Israel

where him and my parents, him and my mother met and then moved to Canada.

So my dad has always been like incredibly left wing, especially both my parents,

but my dad really like he would have, he would have stayed like essentially living on like a commune in his whole life if, you know, he never met my mother basically.

Yeah. And he has like incredible kind of like, I guess it's OCD.

I don't know if it's a disorder, I would say he has obsessive compulsive tendencies.

And yeah, and he has Tourette syndrome, so he's twitchy and I have it as well to some degree,

but those are connected kind of compulsive, you know, compulsion and Tourette's.

So yeah, I mean, yeah, no shortage of strangeness to draw from in my family.

What was his relationship like with money?

I'd say not, not that's relevant.

I mean, yeah, I was not, money was, I think we did not, I did not grow up with a lot of money, you know?

My parents, my mother went to school to be a social worker when I was very young

and then became a social worker, but when I was like a kid, she was a cashier at a, you know, a department store.

And my dad was worked at like a vocational college as an old Budsman, which kind of, you know, is like a swing position to some degrees help facilitates life on the on the campus, you know?

A lot of time was spent working in the game room from my memory.

So yeah, we grew up, you know, in a small apartment and then.

So yeah, I think some people who don't grow up with a lot of money,

I think are taught to really like revere money and kind of put a lot of emphasis on it.

And I think other people who don't grow up with a lot of money kind of are taught that it's not that important.

And as long as you have enough to do certain things, then then that's enough.

And it's not something that you should like fetishize or, you know, make the be all and all by any means.

And I was definitely more raised like that.

Yeah.

Is this sometimes a bit of a paradox when your parents don't value money

and maybe they sometimes struggle with it that you grow up trying to avoid that struggle?

Definitely.

I for sure had some things when I was young where I was afraid of being broke

and I'm sure that for sure informed elements of my ambition, you know,

I'm very lucky in that it also coincided with a very strong like creative drive, you know?

But I definitely, yeah, remember being very concerned that we didn't have enough money

and my parents not being that concerned that we didn't have enough money,

which probably made me more concerned that we didn't have enough money

because I was like, why aren't they worried we don't have enough money?

So yeah, that was that was something that was kind of, but then that was when I was like very young.

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And then as I got older, I saw that, you know, when I got into high school and stuff, I saw that I would be fine, you know what I mean, on the grand scale of things. In that apartment when you were quite and quite very young, if I'd asked you, if I said, Seth, what are you, what are you going to be when you're older? What would you have responded to me?

I mean, I probably would have said I want to write movies or something like that. I probably would have wanted to be a ninja up until a certain age, a ninja turtle specifically, probably.

And then and then yeah, I remember when I was probably like six or seven years old is when I started to really want to like the idea of making movies became very like fascinating to me. And I was one of those kids with a camera who was like running around making movies. I'm obsessed with movies, quoting movies, want to watch all I want to do is watch movies. I like I love I like fell in love with movies at a very young age.

Was there an influence in your household that inspired that love for movies?

My parents love movies. They're like huge movie fans.

They would go to movies again. It was one of those things like we did not have a lot of money. We would go to movies all the time.

And in Vancouver, Tuesdays was like the cheap movie night for whatever reason. It's a slow night.

So maybe they incentivize customers and almost every Tuesday, we as a family would go to whatever new movie had come out that week.

So we saw I saw everything in theaters like constantly and I loved it.

And my parents, you know, had a VCR and would take movies off of television.

We had this, you know, I think a lot of, you know, people my age are kind of defined also by like those VHS tapes that you grew up with because it was like a finite amount of movies.

And then I went to high school, me and Evan across the street from two video rental stores, a blockbuster and a Rogers, which was like the Canadian competitor.

But we would go there every day after school and just like walk the aisles and for hours in rent movies.

We go there on the weekends and rent talk, walk the aisles and rent movies.

Like we were and yeah, ever since I was young and then I met my writing partner who became my producing partner and directing partner Evan when I was 12.

So I was very young.

But ever since ever since then, I can remember I was like obsessed with movies basically.

Yeah. And stand up.

That came in at 12 years old as well.

Roughly. Yeah.

You know, for me, I love comedy in general and I love stand up comedy.

My parents are big stand up comedy fans.

But truthfully, it was kind of like a means to an end to me because I get it's funny because it's like it was like weirdly well thought out for being 12 or 13 years old.

But I was like, oh, if I do stand up comedy at that time, sitcoms are very popular. Seinfeld things like that.

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So I was like, I was like the most practical path for me to have some sort of success doing this is I'll start doing stand up comedy.

Maybe I can get an agent and then maybe I can like get on a sitcom and be like, you know, Ray Romano or Jerry Seinfeld or something like that.

And then maybe I can write movies and that can like turn into a movie career basically.

And that was like, if you were to ask me when I was like 12 years old, like, what is your life going to be like?

That's what I would have hoped it would be like, you know?

Remarkable because most 12 year olds.

I know.

I'm thinking like that.

What was your relationship like with school?

Was there any influence there on you as a man today that early relationship with school in your peers?

For sure.

I mean, the first movie I wrote was super bad with Evan and it was very much informed by our high school experience.

It's largely based on real things that happened.

I would say the educational aspect of school were was lost on me.

And I from a very young age knew that my ultimate life path did not it was not going to, you know, follow, you know, an academic route, you know, and and my parents never put that much emphasis on it.

Honestly, like they weren't like you have to my dad dropped out of college.

You know that they weren't like you have to do this, you know, I think more than anything, they actually saw that I was like very inspired to do comedy and I love movies and they saw I was really

to work very willing to work very hard from a very young age.

And so honestly, from the time I entered high school, which was 13, they were like, they didn't care that much that I was not doing that high school because from because I was always working really hard on writing movies and doing standup comedy, like from around that time until I got a little older.

But like they saw I wasn't like lazy.

I was just motivated to do something other than school, but the culture of school I love and the things

that happened at school I loved.

And I thought the kids I went to school with were hilarious and and we would go to parties every weekend

and people's parents be out of town and we were trying to hook up with girls and buy beer and our friends

were getting licenses and fake IDs and all this shit and and I thought it was awesome and hilarious.

And and I went to like a public high school in like a big city, you know, like there was like 3,000 kids at my school.

Vancouver is a real big metropolitan city with downtown and so, you know, neighborhoods and the

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good area,
the bad, you know, you could really get into trouble in Vancouver.
So it provided a lot of like adventures, you know, and and I loved it.
And and and I wasn't one of those people even either.
It's not like we were popular or cool or anything, but we weren't like tortured by high school.
We were like, this is a fun adventure and we can have fun here.
And and especially if we don't put too much stakes on the actual like doing well here part of it.
Adam, at 15 years old, you went to a Canadian comedy festival.
Do you remember?
I'm sure you remember.
Yeah.
Yeah, I entered like a competition, I think it was.
Yeah.
And yeah, and I did pretty well.
I placed pretty well in the in the competition.
I was OK.
I was pretty good at stand up comedy like it was.
Yeah.
Do you remember the instance where Jerry Seinfeld showed up?
Yes, I do.
I came that was actually I was auditioning to get into the just for laughs festival in Los Angeles.
And I show up and it's during the day, which is not great.
There's not that many people there.
It's maybe like five o'clock.
Not a good time to stand up comedy.
I'm like 15 years old.
I fly I flew in for this, you know, there's comics going up and doing their thing.
There's like the scout from the just for laughs festival there and like I'm about to go up and I'm next
and the MC is about to introduce me.
And yeah, and someone comes over and they're like Jerry Seinfeld is about to show up and he's
going to go up instead of you.
And I was like, what?
I'm like, I'm here to I'm here to audition for this thing.
And they're like, yeah, well, he'll go up and then you'll go up after.
I'm like, I'm going to go after Jerry Seinfeld and they're like, yes.
And so he goes up.
He like I mean, he's his show is still like he's as famous as as you can as a comedy star as there is
alive at that moment.
And it's what you're hoping.
It's like you go to a standup comedy club at that time hoping Jerry Seinfeld will come in and then it
happened.
And these people like it's like they won the lottery and he comes and he just like annihilates and
then he gets off stage.

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And then they're like, and now like from Vancouver, 15 year olds, Seth Rogen.

And yeah, I bombed horribly and I did not get into the just for laughs comedy festival.

And I told Jerry Seinfeld that story and he was completely uninterested.

He could have cared less.

It seems like a tough thing for 15 year olds, pretty horrific firing line for a 15 year old to put themselves in.

Standup comedy.

Yeah, I think part of it, honestly, was informed by like my night, my overall like naïveté to some degree.

But I also I.

Yeah, I was I was good enough at it that it instantly wasn't like a viscerally painful experience, you know what I mean?

And it's probably, you know, I played some sports in high school, but it was probably a similar.

I imagine it's a similar mentality where you're like, yeah, there's stakes to this and there's ups and downs to

this, but overall, I'm good at it and seem to be moving, progressing in the right direction.

So it's worth the stress of it in order to pursue it, you know.

And at times it's phenomenal and as fun as you would hope anything would be, you know.

But also, honestly, what was more fun was at that time, me and Evan started to write super bad.

And that was like what I really loved doing.

And like I like doing stand-up comedy and writing stand-up jokes, but like I loved sitting with Evan and writing a movie.

And to me, that was like at the time it's frustrating because you're like, will this ever get made?

Is this pointless?

Are we wasting our time?

Is this just a silly pursuit?

But it was still.

It was I just loved it, you know.

Is this through line in all your sort of creative work often, which is about like making people laugh?

Yeah. Have you ever figured out like why, you know, because I've sat here with a lot of comedians and there always seems to be something about comedians where, I don't know, some instance when they, you know,

maybe they're younger or some kind of inspiration in their life, which made them somewhat compelled to

and almost energised by the pursuit of making other people laugh and happy.

Have you ever, does that resonate with you?

And have you ever identified where that comes from in you, that pursuit of making people laugh and happy?

I think for me, I don't, I don't like, I think some comedians are like a dark origin story.

You know what I mean?

I don't, you know, I think for me, it was like something I liked and something I was good at and something that I was very like encouraged and fostered to do from a very young age.

And I was lucky enough to find another guy my age who was as good at it as I was

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and as interested at doing it as I was, which is like miraculous.

Like I had a lot of like, you know, I read part of that Malcolm Gladwell book and I'm not, you know, about the, you know, the miraculous kind of set of circumstances that it takes to become like remotely successful in this terrible world of ours.

You know what I mean?

And like, I think it was things like my parents were big comedy fans.

So I saw a comedy from a very young age.

I'm from Canada, which is like a place that acclaims comedy and respects comedy.

So culturally, I'm like from a place where comedy is like, you know, a relevant part of the culture.

You know, Canadians, some of their biggest like exports are comedians and comedy shows.

Lauren Michaels is Canadian, you know, SETV, you know, a lot of great, some of the greatest comedians

of all time are Canadian, you know, and so it's something that was always kind of just always a part of like the DNA of being a Canadian person, I think to some degree as well.

Also, I'm from Vancouver where they made movies, not to say it's like I grew up in Hollywood, but like you would see movie sets around.

You would see I went to a high school.

They shot some movies at the high school because it was a very like cinematic looking high school.

So you would see trucks and stuff like that.

I didn't know anyone who worked in the entertainment industry, but like you kind of would see it around.

So it made it a little more obtainable and if we lived like in the middle of fucking nowhere and it just seemed like completely abstract, you know what I mean?

So I think that I think that like my path is honestly one of like being supported and and being and working

hard and being very diligent, but also like having an environment that kind of like bolstered my ambition.

You know what I mean?

Yeah, 16 years old.

You get a part in Freaks and Geeks.

Yeah.

And that brings you to LA with your family.

Yeah.

What your entire family came to LA?

My parents, my sister was in college.

Yeah.

And I read that they had lost their jobs around that time.

Yes.

And that made you the sole breadwinner in the house.

Basically, yes.

What did that feel like pressure?

Being 16 years old and being the breadwinner for your house because your parents have lost their jobs.

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In a way, it felt like an alleviation of pressure because after six, I remember my dad telling me like after after like

three months or six months of being on Freaks and Geeks, he's like, you've made more money in this time than I've made my entire life put together.

So like, like if anything was like an amazing alleviation of of a weight because there was money all of a sudden for the first time in our lives.

Things could be paid for easily, you know?

And so I was more than happy to provide for everybody because I suddenly had access to an amount of money.

That was like absurd compared to the amount of money I grew up with access to or anyone in my family grew up with with access to, you know?

Your work ethic, which I've read about over and over again throughout your book and throughout various interviews you've done seems to be pretty spectacular.

And one of the quotes that I read is if there were any kind of dark driving force behind your any ambitions, quote, it would be some sense of financial insecurity.

Yeah, probably, but that that's gone, which is maybe why I don't make as many things as I used to.

That's an interesting journey to go on being driven by having that sort of financial insecurity, developing a real sort of really strong relationship with work and then that falling away.

Yeah, and it fell away pretty fast, I think, honestly.

Like I think by the time I, you know, there was a point, so yeah, I was on Freezing Geeks and then undeclared and then I didn't work for years.

But by then it's not like my parents were like incapable of making enough money to survive on their own also.

So like, once I had some money, like, it was just bonus money, you know what I mean?

Like, part of what had happened is they lost their jobs and we leave them a house.

So we sold our house in Vancouver and that's why everyone moved to LA.

So there was a little more money available because we had sold our house.

So like, it's not like my parents were like just like a, you know, a leech on, you know, they were able to like make a baseline level of like survivable income.

So when I had more money, it just, yeah, it kind of just added a cushion of comfort.

And then there were times then they moved back to Canada when I was like 18 and I was in LA and that's around when I became unemployed for years and years.

So I did then start to have financial burden, but it was like a sole file, you know, it was my own financial burden.

And it was not, I did not feel like I was letting my whole family down or not, you know, providing for my whole family.

It was more, I just, myself was like, oh, I might have to move.

I might have to move back in with my family because I might not be able to afford to live in Los Angeles for longer because I was unemployed for years, basically.

Yeah.

You were unemployed for years and years after that first role on Freaks and Geeks.

Yeah, we did Freaks and Geeks and we did a show called Undeclared that was on Fox in 2000, 2001, and then then I basically didn't work for like three years, essentially.

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Yeah.

What's going through your, you know, you're presumably doing auditions and stuff like that.

Yeah.

Does it ever like, what's that phase like of unemployment?

Most people quit at that point.

That's the point where you say, fuck this.

That didn't even occur to me.

I did not.

I was pretty getting, I was pretty kind of had like a chip on my shoulder to some degree.

I was writing a lot still, you know, we were still, that's probably when we wrote Pineapple Express, you know, so we had finished super bad.

No one wanted to make it, but we thought it was good.

So we kind of put it on the shelf or like, let's write another movie.

And then we wrote Pineapple Express.

So we were busy and we thought it was awesome and we thought both the movies were awesome.

But in general, we were also getting like very positive feedback as writers.

We just weren't getting like hired to do anything and no one would make our movie.

So it was, it was this weird mixture of things kind of being like encouraging and very frustrating at the same time.

And, and, and that's almost like the worst part about kind of being in that part of your career, which is the part of the career.

Most people who live in Hollywood are in, which is one where it's like any given phone call is one that is like making your fucking life.

Or one that is yet another door slamming in your face that you have to like just suck up and keep moving forward.

You know what I mean?

And, and so that, that's happening a lot at that time.

Yeah. And seeing your friends also start to do very well and start to make things, you know, that is, it's very encouraging in some ways,

but you inherently get very jealous and you start to doubt yourself and you start to doubt if you are good enough to do it.

Or if anyone will ever like see in your, see in you what you see in yourself, you know, but yeah, it's, you know, though it's pretty warm and all and all usually.

So it's easy to just hang out and keep plugging on.

What's your use the word doubt yourself there?

What's your journey been with, been with self doubt?

People would obviously look at you and assume that you have zero self doubt because you've been so successful done.

I think, I think all creative people and people who have creative pursuits in their life have self doubt. Like it's impossible to put yourself out there.

I think from my experience and from meeting all the creative people I've met in my life from people who, you know, it's their first day on set.

You know, and they have one line to Steven Spielberg, they all have self doubt.

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They're all worried people won't like what they're doing, that people are going to think it's stupid, that they're going to think they're stupid for wanting to do it, that they're going to just reject it. And, and, and by proxy reject them, you know, that is like that is from my experience pretty constant across the board for all creative types who genuinely like care about what they do.

I'm sure there are some people who technically like are maybe actors or something and do not have any of that, but they're probably not very good and don't care that much about what they do.

You know what I mean?

But in general, from my experience, I would say that applies to creative people as self doubt.

And, and for me, it's, it comes in waves, you know, you have you make a thing everyone likes gets a little better.

You make a thing everyone fucking hates against a little worse.

You know, it, you know, and, and that's a part of also doing what, you know, I do is like, you get, you know, like, there, you know, it's, it's like, you know, it's funny.

I was saying to some of my work with the other day, like, I'm not, I'm at the point.

It's funny in my career, we're like, not a lot of people are in a position to like yell at me in my job.

But like the New York Times will like publish an entire article like saying I suck at my job.

And so like, that's the trade off is like, I've worked my way up to not having to deal with that much like personal conflict and face to face conflict.

But I will have like, just like a cultural institution tell everyone that I suck, you know, and so that that's kind of like that that will add self doubt things like that, you know, and yeah.

And so it's for me, it's for me, something that's present, but I try not to let it stop me from doing the things that I think are interesting and the things that I think I would enjoy watching, you know, has ever hurt you.

Oh, yeah.

I mean, what, like, what, self doubt?

I'd say a lack of self doubt is maybe hurt me at times.

I mean, like the criticism, like someone.

Oh, yeah, of course, it hurts everyone.

Yes, very much so.

I think if most critics knew how much it hurt the people that that made the things that they are writing about, they would second guess the way they write these things.

Like, it's devastating.

It takes year.

I know people who never recover from it.

Honestly, years, year decades of being hurt by because it's very personal, you know, it's not like.

It's not it is personal, you know, and so it is devastating when you are being like institutionally told that your personal expression was bad.

Like that is like devastating, you know, and something that people carry with them literally their entire lives.

And I get why it fucking sucks.

You know, I read it, I was reading through various moments in your life where I mean, you've had back to back to back successes.

So it's hard to find.

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That's definitely not true.

I mean, from the bird's eye view, you look at your work, your portfolio.

I've been trending well.

The thing you talk about and you've spoken about in interviews is is Green Hornet where you got you received some critical reviews for that.

If I was a fly on the wall in one of those moments where you've received that feedback is coming in and it's coming in, you know, critically, what would I see if I was a fly on the wall in your home?

Like what does it do stay in your bed?

Do you like what's the the human impact it has on you?

It's different things.

And I think there's different, you know, and that's another funny thing about making movies is like and having like and just being like a person who works a lot is like life goes on.

Like you could be making another movie as your movie is bombing, which is a funny thing because it's it's bittersweet because like you you know that things will be okay.

You're already you're already working.

You know what I mean?

If the fear is the movie bombs and you won't get hired again.

Well, you don't have to worry about that.

You're already you've been hired.

It's too late, you know, but it's an emotional way conundrum and time just to just dealing with that and navigating that, you know, for Green Hornet.

It's like literally, yeah, like the critics were the reviews were coming out and it was pretty bad and people just kind of like hated it.

Like it seemed like a thing people just were taking like joy and disliking a lot.

You know what I mean?

But it was it opened to like \$35 million, which was like, I think at the time the biggest opening weekend I had ever been associated with in any capacity.

And so it was also like it did pretty well.

And that's and it was a funny thing where it really didn't that one.

And that's what's nice sometimes is like you do get, you know, you can grasp for some sense of success at times, you know, and, and, but I honestly think things like the interview were more like painful as far as like people really taking joy and talking shit about it.

And, and really kind of questioning, you know, the types of people that would want to make a movie like that in general, like, I think, yeah, that felt far more personal.

I think Green Hornet felt like I just had fallen victim to like, which was true, like, like, you know, a big fancy thing, which was like, oh, super.

And we were just kind of like also like ahead of the curve a little bit too much, I think as well as something like we were early on that on that wave, you know, and so I think that was easier to deal with in a lot of ways because it was like not so much like a creative failure on our parts but more like a conceptual failure.

I think, like the interview, people more treated us like we had creatively failed, which sucked much worse.

And that's happened a few times, yeah, where people really act like we've just, and again, it's not,

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I'm not going to act like this is that bad, like this is not on the grand scale of things in life.

It's not that bad.

Like, and I've gotten much better at dealing with it as well.

And I think when I was younger, I really like did not have as much perspective as I do.

And now I am not, I do not carry it with me nearly as much as I used to, you know, yeah.

It's like, it is the center of your world, though, these things because you've pulled your creative heart into, into something.

So it is you.

Oh, yeah.

It feels like a personal rejection.

It's like very much attached to yourself.

Oh, yeah.

It feels like a very personal rejection.

And it doesn't, and it doesn't feel like constructive.

It feels human impact there.

What's like the human.

Yeah.

I don't know.

Sometimes you try, you try different things.

Sometimes you go to dinner when you just try to forget about it.

Sometimes you sit there and watch movies.

Sometimes you're literally just like sitting on the couch fucking pissed and devastated.

I've had different approaches.

I use sometimes I would go to the beach.

I used to have a house on the beach and I would go to the beach the weekends when movies came out.

Yeah.

And any opening weekend, honestly, and any time I have a thing coming out, it sucks because it just is stressful.

It's like birth, like it, which is just an inherently painful process.

Even though it is maybe bringing something beautiful into the world, it is a painful act.

And I think that is like what releasing a movie is for the people who made it is like in some ways it's inherently painful.

And in some ways it's inherently beautiful and joyous, but in some ways it's also just very painful.

This is the story of creativity.

Yeah.

Making anything that you care about that is slightly challenging or original or new risks, both exceptional success,
but also potential fail.

Yeah.

And the more personal it is, it's like the more the higher the highs can be if it works and the lower the lows are.

If it doesn't, you know, the more the more personal the rejection feels.

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Yeah.

A lot of people can relate to that.

I know for sure.

That period say after you receive feedback on the interview.

Yeah.

How long is that process of trying to like get back on your feet and get it out your head and stop it occupying your mind?

I mean, it's interesting.

Like, I think it's different and it rears its head in different ways.

And I think like imposter syndrome or self doubt or, you know, this phenomenon where like the more you know about a thing, the less you feel you know about it in some ways and vice versa.

You know, I think that is something again that is like a common theme in creative people's lives. The fact that you read about it all the time is is comforting honestly because you're like, oh, it's a thing.

It's out there, you know, but to me, it's never been that hard to to do the creatively risky thing and it's never been that hard for me to convince myself to like take the leap and do the thing that is maybe crazy and do the thing that is

a big swing and and to put myself out there. And I think that's also what's good, I guess, about being rejected enough times is you kind of like you see like it sucks, but you can survive it.

And so it's ultimately worth trying to do it again, you know, and and even the worst case scenario is survivable if you just keep going from a creative standpoint, you know what I mean.

So I think that's also like, yeah, we're, yeah, we haven't stopped.

It'll nag at you at times. But if anything, my biggest fear is to make a thing that's like fucking boring or not taking a big swing or doesn't seem like it's trying to push things forward or like it's just like happy to relax.

And, you know, like, I think like the fact that we get to make anything movies, TV shows, it's like, there are so many people who are trying to do it and we get to do it.

So like, we should fucking go for it and we're spending the money of these giant fucking conglomerate corporations like they're letting us spend millions of dollars to make our crazy things like we should go for it.

Like, we should really look back and be like, wow, like, can you fucking believe we did that we that we spent hundreds of millions of Amazon's dollars doing that, you know, like, like that, that's what's exciting.

So, yeah, it's not like nags you but I think luckily for me and I and it's who I'm surrounded by, you know, to some degree as well but like, we've always, you know, there's moments where you doubt yourself and you kind of bubble.

But I've had always someone being like, fuck it, let's do it, you know.

I get the sense, funnily enough, from just the couple of minutes we spent together that you, you have no, like, you almost don't, you're such a lover of what you do at heart that you almost couldn't not do it.

Like, so here's a question then, if I told you today that you could no longer make movies or do anything in the entertainment or creative space.

That would be hard. I become a ceramicist.

Which I do spend a lot of time doing.

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I know.

It would be a real bummer though.

What would, what would actually your life be?

I mean, I would, I could, it's tough to think of because it is very like ingrained with who I am and what I do and like, and it is like, I could stop working.

I have enough money to, if I didn't want to keep working, I could, I could never work again and live the exact life I live now until I die, you know.

It, I have no kids.

I have not trying to leave generational wealth to anybody like, I'm gonna, I'm gonna, you know, like, we could just keep going.

It's genuinely because like, I enjoy it and it's, and it's a part of who I am and how I spend my day and, and what I love doing and, and people generally seem to enjoy the output which I enjoy and, and it seems to be additive to the creative landscape of film and television, the things that I get to be a part of, you know, and so, um, yeah, it's, but I, it mostly, it mostly comes down to I just like doing it.

And so it would be hard to think of what else I would do because like, on it, like I, I just write, I love, I enjoy writing and I've been doing it since I've been writing like, you know, screenplays since I was 12 years old, you know, I'm 40.

So it's like, it's so much a part of who I am that like, I do it all the time.

If I have, I'm generally working on a few things, if I'm making up a coffee and have five minutes, like, I'll, I'll write for a few minutes.

Like, you know, I, I, I genuinely enjoy it.

So it would be hard to imagine.

I wouldn't, I don't know what I would do.

You were, um, you have ADHD?

I don't know.

Maybe.

I mean, I'm pretty good at focusing, honestly.

I read that.

I read that you had Tourette's and ADHD.

I do, oh yeah, I guess Tourette's.

I mean, maybe I'm more, yeah, I mean, I, I, I, some Tourette's like, yeah, some Tourette's, which is connected to ADHD.

Yeah.

What does that have had a role in your life?

Is it been causal at all?

Um, I don't fully understand Tourette's if I'm being completely honest.

I don't.

Well, it's kind of connected to like a compulsion disorder where you, it's like, it manifests in like physical ticks and twitches.

Um, the most extreme versions are like people, you know, screaming, like, you know, swear words and shit like that.

But it all roots from like a compulsion to do it.

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Um, and like, it's like scratching an itch.

That's the best way I can describe it.

I'm sure you've been sitting across from people who twitch or have a weird eyebrow thing they're doing or a weird thing they're doing.

You know what I mean?

And I see it so often and that is, that is a mild case of Tourette's syndrome.

And I think so many people have it or undiagnosed.

And I know the exact feeling those people have when they are doing that.

And it literally feels like you have an itch in your hand and you're scratching it.

And it's the same thing from like a musculature like movement standpoint.

You feel like if you don't cock up your eyebrow, you're not scratching that itch.

And when you do, you're like, ah, I did it.

And you have a.

Uh, yeah, at times.

For me, it was always pretty mild physically, but I still, it does.

I feel the urge at times, but I'm very good at not doing it.

As you might know, the show is now sponsored by Airbnb.

Absolutely love Airbnb.

Always have always been a, you know, saved my life on so many occasions.

And my team, when we first got in touch with Airbnb, we're talking about how most people don't realize that their place where they currently live could become an Airbnb.

And I guess the second question there is how much could your place be worth?

And it turns out you could be sitting on an Airbnb gold mine without even knowing it.

Some people Airbnb their entire homes when they're away.

That's what I did in New York.

Whenever I left New York, my place was on Airbnb and people rented it out.

Sometimes for a day, sometimes for two days, sometimes for a week.

And it's a great way to cover some of the bills while you're away.

So whether you're looking to go on holiday or you just want some extra cash for bills or you want to buy something nice for a Valentine that you love, whatever it might be,

head over to [airbnb.co.uk slash host](https://airbnb.co.uk/host) and you can find out how much your current property where you live can earn while you're not there.

I suspect it might blow your mind because it certainly blew mine.

I'm not quite cut out for this world, but weed makes it okay.

And in a different interview, I read that you'd said you would find life really hard without marijuana.

Yeah, for sure.

I smoke weed all day.

So I would, yeah, I would imagine it would be worse if I didn't.

All day every day?

Yeah.

Today?

Oh, yeah.

After every day.

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Yes.

I smoke weed all day, every single day since I was 20 years old, maybe something like that.
20.

Yeah.

And I've been very productive in that term.

Clearly.

Clearly that's what I've been missing.

When you say that you wouldn't be cut out for this world, but weed makes it okay, what do you mean?

I mean, in the book and in life, I would, I equate it to shoes or glasses.

Like it is, you know, our shoes like a crutch we use, or are they a thing that we have culturally decided to make our lives easier and better?

You know, that is exactly how weed is to me.

Could I not wear shoes?

Probably.

Could I not smoke weed?

Probably.

Would I just much rather smoke weed all day?

Yes.

You know, and it's the same.

That is how I view it.

It only makes my journey through this life more comfortable, more palatable, easier to process, easier to manifest the things that I want to do.

Exactly how I would be trying to do the same things I do in my life without shoes on or without my glasses on or without a jacket on.

That is what it would be like for me to do it without smoking weed all day.

It just, I could probably do it.

It would just be a bit more of a fucking pain in the ass.

Seth Rogen, that didn't smoke weed all day, every day.

What would, what do you believe his life would be?

How his life would be different?

I mean, I would not probably have a weed company.

I probably wouldn't have made the movie Pineapple Express.

I maybe wouldn't.

I mean, who the fuck knows?

I maybe wouldn't have conceived of a lot of the things I've conceived of over the years.

Weed has been always like a very powerful social element for me and my friends.

We've hung out a lot of the ideas we've come up with.

We've come up with hanging out and smoking weed.

You know, you don't come over the movie Sausage Party, like Sausage Party, you know, not hanging out and smoking weed.

So I think like the environment it has created amongst me and my collaborators has been very additive for sure to my creative output.

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So, yeah, I mean, in abstract ways and in very specific ways, you know, like, like Pineapple Express being, you know, the most specific probably.

I was looking at the wording.

The phrase, I would, I'm not quite cut out for this world.

I found really curious.

I don't think any human is.

That's more, I think no human is quite cut out for the world as is exemplified by the fact that we wear underwear, that we need toilet paper, that we have shoes.

We're not like these pure beings that just like go out into the world and can exist flawlessly.

We do dozens of things that are external to make our lives livable.

It's actually natural, unlike underwear, you know, and shoes like and glasses, you know, it exists in the real world.

But that is part of my premise is no human is quite quite out for this world.

We, everyone has things they use to make their lives livable, you know, and for me, weed is one of those things, just like a roof is one of those things, you know,

I can tell you the the cost of the roof here because it's causing this sound.

Yeah, exactly.

Making it not great for our podcasting, which I think is an actual thing.

Can you tell me, is there a cost to weed in terms of has there been a cost in your life to weed?

The upsides are clear because I can see you.

No, there's literally from my, you know, I mean, I've gotten what I was younger because weed is illegal.

Stupidly, there has been situations I have found myself in that are not great in the pursuit of getting weed.

But I don't blame weed for that.

I blame the government for making weed illegal and making me jump through all these hoops to get it, you know.

But in general, in my life, no, there has been no downside to weed or my use of weed or my love of weed.

Maybe it's cost me jobs throughout my life.

I'm in the Mario Brothers movie coming out soon.

I'm in the Ninja Turtles movie that I wrote and produced coming out soon.

Like I'm producing things for giant, you know, companies that do not seem to mind.

So I have not, you know, Steven Spielberg put me in this movie.

I've not seen a definitive impact on my career because I'm known very much for being someone who smokes weed all the time.

You know what I mean? All that success you've had, all those movies you named recently, some of them of which are coming out soon.

Having spoken to you today, I get work ethic.

I get your innate passion, which seems to have been there since you were a child.

But there's people that have both of those things and they're not Seth Rogen, you know what I mean?

So is there anything else when you look back on your life, you talked about the circumstance, your

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mother's being around that culture.

Is there anything about you in particular, a talent, and people find this hard to answer because it requires you to say something nice about yourself.

And so celebrities often say, you know, what is it that makes you good at what you do?

I think I, I think I think I honestly think because I grew up watching so many movies and having parents that appreciated them.

I, from a very young age, had an inherent understanding of cinematic storytelling of what and that specifically from a writing standpoint from how the movies were written.

That is for whatever reason how my brain processed it, how the characters were introduced, how the conflicts between them were set up, how they played out throughout the movie, how they resolved themselves or didn't resolve them themselves.

Throughout the movie, how they manifested and set pieces and sequences that exemplified the conflicts and the themes and the, and the tensions between the characters for whatever reason from a very young age.

I was able to understand and write those things and I, you know, I look back now as like a 40 year old person who has produced and helped countless people with their screenplays and written countless screenplays.

Like there are things about like what we put into super bad as like 14 year olds that are like fundamentally functional and good in a way that is like beyond like the average 14 year olds ability. The average, the average writer's ability in a lot of ways, you know, like, and, and that is something that me and Evan really just, we were lucky, like we got it.

And, and I think, honestly, as an actor, I mostly credit my ability to act as my from like a right through a writing lens.

And I think as an actor, I understand what the story needs.

I understand, I understand how that character needs to affect things, what that character needs to do in order for this story to be told effectively.

I don't view my acting as internally as the other actors I work with.

I know it.

I see it.

I talk to them about it all the time.

I view it much more from like a big picture like, okay, here's the role this character plays in the story.

How do I make that work as well as it possibly could, you know, and I can do it.

So I have some performance ability, which not everyone does, but I think I think I am, I think my understanding of how story works kind of helps compensate for my, the fact that I'm not the greatest actor, and that I am able to work with actors who are much better than I am, honestly.

But I think if I had to answer that question, which I'm uncomfortable doing, that is how I would answer it is, for whatever reason, me and I found a guy with the same skill, which is like miraculous. But like from a young age, me and another guy had a very inherent sense of like how to write a movie basically.

There's a young creative listening to this now sat in their bedroom or driving in their car, pushing their pram, walking their dog, whatever, and they they're a creative in whatever industry.

It could be DJing or, you know, authors, they could be an actor.

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Yeah.

What is the actionable advice that you could give to them to, to, you know, give them a shot of because there's a lot of creatives out there that are struggling.

Yeah.

You would have had this bird's eye view on creators that end up being successful, you know, in their careers and those that maybe have the talent, but don't end up getting there.

Is there anything actionable that you can say to them that would help them end up in the talented successful group?

Unfortunately, the only way to mitigate not being successful is to not quit.

That's it.

If you don't quit, you might make it, and if you quit, you definitely won't.

And, and honestly, I think after all the years I've seen people make it and not make it.

The only common denominator is, is that like I've seen actors write themselves off, be like, I'm never going to fucking do this.

Try to get other jobs. One of my dear friends who's an actor.

He's been an actor.

He's a great actor, a brilliant actor.

And his career ebbs and flows, comes and goes.

He'll star in a TV show for a few years.

He won't work for two years.

He went and tried to get a job at like a car dealership one day.

And I was like, what are you doing about it?

Like, and he's like, I can't, I quit acting.

No one's going to fucking hire me again.

I'm unhireable.

Now he's like, like the star of the most successful play on Broadway right now.

And like, because he just got this role a couple of years after that.

And he's in one of the biggest movies that's coming out next year.

He's in it.

Like, and, and, and it's because he didn't actually quit.

He kept going, you know, and it's not, you know, especially Hollywood, it's not a fair industry.

It is not fair who makes it.

The best people don't make it.

You know, it's very luck oriented.

It's very connections oriented.

I'm lucky like, and I also worked hard and thank God I, you know, I'm a good enough writer that I've been able to have enough longevity in my career once I got lucky.

But like a lot of luck played into my success, you know, but that being said, I've seen people get lucky very random times.

Through random ways.

I always think about like Ian McKellen, like, did you, had you heard of him before he was 65 years old?

Like that guy, I didn't like, as I had never fucking heard the words Ian McKellen until he was

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Magneto and X-Men.

And all of a sudden he's like in Lord of the Rings.

He's one of the most famous people on earth.

He got famous when he's like 60.

Like, like that's what happens to people sometimes, you know what I mean?

It's like, you never know, you know?

And so I think that is, is what's interesting is, and if you like it, then just don't quit.

And as long as you have enough to survive, then just keep trying to do it, you know?

But there's going to be something that I could do to increase my luck.

Be really good at it.

I think making, being nice, honestly, being nice, being the type of person people want to be around.

The people like that people that comes down to it want to help.

And instead of not help, that is very good.

Like, I've seen that just if people don't like being around you, then you will fail because you need other people to help you succeed, you know?

Working hard is like something you can control in a very uncontrollable world, I find.

And like, you know, it's funny, I was meeting with someone recently who like ascended very high in Hollywood.

And she was like, I always fetishized hard work.

Like, to me, that was like, like, if you weren't working hard, I like had no regard for you, basically.

And like, and to me, that was like, and that's a good reminder of like, those are the people you're up against.

And that was something that I always knew from a young age was like, I don't consider myself a competitive person,

but I knew succeeding in Hollywood was inherently a competitive pursuit.

There's only so many jobs, and there's way more motherfuckers trying to get their jobs, those jobs, than there are jobs available.

So by the nature of that, I was competing with people for these jobs.

And I knew I had to be able to look at myself and be like, am I at least working harder than everyone else who was competing for this job?

I might not be better than them or smarter than them or have as many connections with them or be as good looking as them or any of these things,

but I can at least work harder than them, you know?

And that to me was something that was like controllable, and I've never seen someone regret the amount of hard work they put into their pursuit.

And so, you know, that that is something that will help you succeed, I think.

Has you referenced that you don't have any kids?

I do not. That has helped me succeed as well.

Definitely.

Really?

Oh, yeah.

It's a whole huge thing I'm not doing, which is raising children.

People obviously, someone will be listening, but yeah, but it will make you happier.

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You know, someone might say that I'm trying to rebuttal.

I don't think it would. I've been around, obviously, a lot of children.

I'm not ignorant to what it's like to, I've seen everyone I know has kids.

I see, you know, I'm 40 again, you know, like it's not, I know, you know, some of my friends have had kids for decades, you know, some people want kids.

Some people don't want kids.

I think a lot of people have kids before they even think about it from what I've seen.

Honestly, you just are told you go through life, you get married, you have kids.

It's what happens.

And and me and my wife were just neither of us were like that, you know, and honestly, the older we get, the more happy and reaffirmed we are with our choice to not have kids.

Like it was something we kind of talked about more and we're like, are we made the right choice?

Are we sure now if more than anything, the conversation is like, honestly, thank God, we don't have children.

We get to do whatever we want.

We are in our, we are, we are in the prime of our lives.

We are smarter than we've ever been.

We understand ourselves more than we ever have.

We have the capacity to achieve a level of work and a level of communication and care for one another and a lifestyle.

We can live with one another that we've never been able to live before, and we can just do that.

And we don't have to raise a child, which the world does not need right now.

And so that was, and so yeah, it's, we're very happy with our choice to not have kids.

And I just, I work, I work with a lot of people with kids and I see definitively that I have more time to both do the things I need to do and the things I enjoy doing than they do.

And not to say their kids don't bring them joy, but I say this truthfully.

And I, I, I, me and my wife seem to get a lot more active enjoyment out of not having kids than anyone I know seems to get out of having kids.

Speaking of your wonderful wife.

Yes.

In my very extensive research, I found a series of photos.

I found this one.

Yes.

That's my wife, Lauren, exceptionally beautiful.

She's lovely.

And I found this one.

Yes.

That's Lauren and her mother.

That's a great photo.

Wow.

It's like a real photo.

Where'd you get this?

Internet.

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That's amazing.

Yes.

This is Lauren and her mother Adele.

Adele moved a few years ago.

Yeah.

You've campaigned exceptionally hard for Alzheimer's following Adele's diagnosis.

Yeah.

Can you tell me about that journey?

Yeah, definitely.

You know, it's funny.

It's like a celebrity, I guess, like, you know, you're kind of asked to do a lot of charity things and find like a cause, I think, you know, and there's, I think there's pressure to find a cause.

And I think a lot of people adopt causes that are not organic to them and who they are.

And they kind of find themselves, you know, in the midst of a cause.

And that had happened to me in the past.

I would go to some charity events and I always felt very out of touch with it and didn't really understand it.

And then I met my wife.

And this is in regards to the charity, but also in regards to just our relationship.

I'd never been in a serious relationship ever in my life, really, like a few months here and there I'd dated, but never.

And in like 2005, I started dating my wife, Lauren, and she was the first serious relationship I ever had.

And very soon after we started dating is when she realized her mother seemed to be showing the first signs of Alzheimer's.

And I knew nothing about that.

It really, it was not in my family.

And what I didn't understand is like, oh, it was a disease that had like no treatment, no cure.

It was only going to steadily get worse until she died from it, which was truly devastating and put me and my wife on like a pretty intense journey for the next, you know, 15 years or so, basically.

And it really, it really took a lot out of us and my wife, especially, you know, Lauren felt very out of control and very devastated and really scrambling for like outlet or in a way to gain some kind of agency over the situation.

Yeah, and our friend suggested we do a comedy show and maybe give the money to like an Alzheimer's charity and we did and it went very well and my wife started telling her story as a young woman whose mother was in her 50s and diagnosed with Alzheimer's.

And it was really not a thing like anyone was talking about at all and she found there was like an enormous need for people to connect with someone who was going through this because a lot of people were going through it and really no one was talking about it.

And we very, we kind of found like a need for this organization that we made HFC, which became like, you know, an Alzheimer's charity that really was like focused on talking to young people.

Many of whom were caretakers for their parents with Alzheimer's, you know, and, and again, it was just a thing it's very stigmatized disease and not a disease very many people are comfortable talking

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about it all and yeah and Lauren, as her mother progressed more and more just talked about it more and more and and it really, yeah, kind of made our charity more and more prominent in the space and yeah has allowed us to do kind of more and more things to help people.

You said people don't talk about it enough and part of that is results in people thinking about Alzheimer's is just losing your keys or forgetting a sentence or something.

Yeah.

What is the reality of Alzheimer's as you've observed it.

Well it's different for everyone but it's inherently for my mother-in-law like she forgot how to speak how to go to the bathroom how to talk.

I mean how to eat how to walk and was essentially like, you know, someone you would move from the bed to the wheelchair force feed essentially move back to the bed.

She was like that for like seven years or something like that.

I think she didn't and again I'm bad with years she didn't speak for several years and and it was yeah if you saw her you wouldn't assume it was dementia Alzheimer's you would assume she had some like horrific stroke or something like that it was not.

It was not what I understood like cognitive decline could cause you know it was far more devastating and and yeah and I think people don't understand how.

Kind of dire it is or they do understand and they just again don't like talking about it because it's really scary and people are weird about their brains mental health obviously in America especially people are very weird about nothing they like talking about.

And so yeah it kind of taps into a lot of things people are just scared of in general.

What toll does that have on the people around her like yourself and your wife.

Um, I mean it was just devastating for my wife especially like it was truly one of the most upsetting thing you could imagine is like very slowly seeing your mother die over the course of years and years and years and years and years and years and years and years and years you know it's.

Yeah, I mean it caused.

Yeah, it was it was very grim, you know.

Um, but through the charity, you know, there was a lot of like kind of hope that came up at times and a lot of like, you know, kind of like wonderful things that it felt like we were able to do as a result of it so there was kind of bittersweet moments but in general it was terrible.

Was that is that been one of the hardest times of your last couple of decades for you that that process. Oh yeah for sure. I mean yeah especially, you know, being married to someone who is going through something incredibly traumatic is.

Yeah, is is is, you know, it's hard for them and it's hard for you to know how to support them properly and and how to, you know, navigate their feelings in a, you know, productive and loving way, you know, and it's obviously much harder for them.

And, you know, it is, but yeah, it's a it's a it can be hard for everybody.

Adele passed away.

Yeah.

What impact does that have on the family?

I mean, in some ways, it is a relief of burden, you know, especially with someone who was so sick for so long with no hope in sight for any for any way to get better, you know.

And, and also like devastating, you know, and and it's something that I'm always having a not having

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to remind myself as I'm always reminding myself of is like, you know, your wife, her mother died recently like there's there's a lot going along with that and and although there's this constant thing that we are not dealing with, there is there is another thing, you know, and and again in many ways, like the active agony of her mother kind of slowly dying was was probably worse, but this is also bad in its own way, you know, you mentioned Americans don't like talking about their mental health. Yeah, or really anything cognitive cognitive functions. Yeah, I've never heard you speak about your mental health. I don't think it's that interesting.

That might be why anxiety.

I really not more than the average, you know, I often think I often think that the creatives over index with anxiety for kind of some of the reasons we talked about earlier. Yeah, I don't. I think I have anxiety but I also am constantly reminding I'm good I think and analyzing my own feelings and behavior to some

degree I do have anxiety sometimes what I'm also having to remind myself that I am like going through things that are objectively anxiety inducing to almost anyone and I would probably be weird if I wasn't feeling some sort of anxiety with the amount of public facing pressure and exposure I have at times. So you just tell yourself like yeah, you feel you this is you are feeling anxious right now because you are dealing with this thing that has a lot of public pressure on it you know.

So I think in general, no in general, I have pretty good mental health, I think.

That's the people who work with me seems like an unhuman way to live right being in the spotlight and being being receptacle to so much public feedback like you talked about how shoes are kind of unnatural and groups are unnatural.

There's the way that we all live these days seem to be so far from what is what it is to be a human. Yeah.

What can we like? What do we need to do do you think to get back to being a little bit more human? I don't know. I don't know if I'm the best person to ask that.

I personally have tried to spend less time on social media. I think that is a good thing. I don't think that contributes to one's humanity necessarily.

What are the things that make you feel most human then and most connected?

I think spending time with my loved ones, my wife, my dog, my sister, my family, my parents, my friends going to dinner with my friends going to their houses, hanging out with my friends, even though I don't have kids, I enjoy going to my friend's house and hanging out with them and their kids, you know, writing, being creative with my friends, doing things with my friends, making things with people that I respect.

And the feeling that I'm a part of making something that I am excited about and that I think is really good.

Again, for me, those are the moments where I feel like I am personally living up to my potential and feeling like, and it is about the other people, even at times when it is work-related.

And I do think, you know, the connections that you make with people, even when they are creative, are relevant and important, you know? And so, yeah, I think those are the things that I value, is like personal relationships and creative ones, which I also view as personal.

You've done so much in the space of writing and entertainment, you've then embarked on other

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pursuits, businesses, you know, Point Gray, Future Success, Houseplant, Massive Success, that's in a different industry, that's in, you know, the more entrepreneurial side of your passions.

What is it now for you? Like, what is the thing? What makes you, having achieved all of this, fired up and excited about a challenge?

Um, I get excited when, and it's a simple metric, I think, which is anytime we're making a thing that I know I would be psyched if I saw it or got it or saw it was out in the world, I get excited.

Like, and that's kind of it. Like, if I'm making a movie and I'm like, I would love this movie. I would see this movie and be like, this is fucking great.

Whoever made this movie, like, fuck, they went for it. They did it. I'd be jealous. I didn't make this movie. That's when I know I'm doing something good.

And it's the same thing with Houseplant. If we make a thing and I'm just like, this is awesome. If I saw this, I would want this. If I saw someone else made this, I'd be like, fuck, why didn't we think of that?

Why didn't we make this? What were we, why were we not thinking of this, you know, um, that to me.

And, and then when we do it and we're like, we did it and we, and it works as well as you want it to. And it feels how you wanted it to me. That's like, it's exciting.

And because it isn't a creative expression. And, and, and I think that's what's exciting to any, again, I think person with like a creative pursuit, which I view Houseplant as and I kind of view everything as to some degree,

which is like, it's all output that is meant to reflect my taste and my sensibilities and those and that of those who are working on it with me, you know, and, and that could be a movie.

It could be a TV show. It could be an ashtray. It could be, it could be any number of things. But, but to me, when I'm excited about it and when it works is when I really think it is the thing that I wanted it to be, which is a thing that I'm excited about and a thing that

if I saw it and someone else made it, I'd be like, yes, that's awesome. You know, and that's the same thing since we've been writing super bad. Like that's why we wrote super bad. We were like, let's write our favorite movie.

Let's write the movie that we want to see and no one else is making. And it was the same thing with Pineapple Express. This is the end. And the boys was a comic book we love.

We're like, let's make this. No one else is going to fuck. Let's make this into something, you know, it's the same thing with everything that we've done for the most part, which is like, let's make the thing we want more than anything.

Why not make the thing that you think other people will want?

Because who the fuck knows what other people want.

And I think luckily, that's a thing we've been lucky with is like, either our taste in the public taste has coincided or or the public has been willing to take cues from our tastes and and and and bite to what we're putting out there, you know what I mean,

which is which is just an almost intangible skill, I think to some degree, which is just making things that connect with people in a big way. And that's not even what every creative person is trying to do. You know what I mean? I know plenty of filmmakers.

Some of my favorite movies are movies that are not trying to connect with giant audiences, you know what I mean, but those are the movies we grew up loving and to us that's a fun challenge is

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like how do we put everything that we think is like risky and subversive and difficult about this idea into something and then have it connect and then have everyone go crazy for it and have everyone be like, yes, like I can't wait to see that, you know.

And that that's just our taste, you know what I mean is we like to we're thinking of like a packed theater Friday night and just wanting people to like go bonkers, you know, and like, that's not everyone's goal, you know, and so that that that's a big part of it too is like, what kind of audience are you are you hoping to have, you know, when people, you know, study people like you they're always looking for like the themes like what's the three things he does that like they're trying to find the like the secrets and whatever else they do that they what's his morning routine whatever else, your creative process, what is from your own observation the most unusual part of it that you know and I'll seem to do it this way but fuck it.

I tend to be able to work on not everyone and I work with a lot I'm lucky also because I get to work with a lot of like, really like the most brilliant people in the world who do what I do so I have a very front row seat to like an incredibly high level of performance, you know, on a writing standpoint acting standpoint directing standpoint, all these things I'm getting to see like, truly the best versions of it, you know, but I think, you know, for me, I am.

I'm good at switching gears in the departmentalizing I find some writers maybe would think that is strange and, and the idea of like writing two things at two different things in one day would be strange to some writers the idea of like okay I'm going to write one TV show in the morning and then a movie in the afternoon I think that.

But again, to me it's very intuitive some writers find switching gears creatively especially midday difficult I can work on five different things throughout the day and whenever I'm working on whatever thing it is I'm pretty able to like fully engage on that thing.

I, I physically write more than I think most people with no with on a keyboard but like, I find a lot of writers want to talk about, like, to me I'm like just write it let's just write it let's just see how it looks let's just try it just write it down like, and I think a lot of people are precious with writing a lot of people, you know, it's like a big, they kind of like they try to like it's very like sanctimonious or something like that, you know, but I try to like, really just write different versions of things share I share a lot of early versions of things with like a group of people that I trust I'm sending rough versions of things to people I'll rewrite it instantly I'll do 100 drafts of something you know, I'm really not precious with that, you know, but, but I don't I mean I don't know.

I mean, I don't know if like, yeah, I don't know what other I don't know people expect I'm more curious than other people's processes honestly like it's so ingrained in who I am but yeah I've been doing it since I was so young, like, it's, it's truly like a part of like my brain chemistry is, and my development was is built around, you know, writing and writing movies specifically so like my personality I think in some ways is is is engineered around writing and and making movies in some ways because I've been doing it since I was so young, so I really think it's like, it's become a very fluid part of who I am.

It doesn't feel like often I'm like sitting down to work it's like it's just kind of fluid part of my day. I do also have like, I'm very I get a schedule sent to me by my assistant at the end of every night that tells me what I'm doing the next day.

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I pretty much just do what's on schedule. She sends you an email right. Yeah. And it will say 10pm do this. Yeah, it'll be like 10am to 2am but and they'll be like giant free blocks of time in there where I will write usually or me and my partner will organize our own will will organize our own writing time amidst that but yeah I mean I'm pretty regimented from a schedule standby which does surprise people because people will encounter me be like let's get together like sometime this week and I'm always like like I'm like scheduled like like a month out pretty rigorously throughout the days. But if I asked you what your schedule was next week. I have no fucking clue. I don't know my schedule was Monday. I'm also yeah like I'm not I'm good at like dealing with right in front of me honestly as well like I can't begin to process what's happening next week like I truly that's too much for me like I I know like the big things like the benchmarks you know what I mean but if you're leaving the country. Yeah there's some big thing I have to do but like in general I have no idea what's happening.

The week before. Have you a bit of a left field one but have you observed a point in your trajectory where you become somewhat so successful or somewhat you know so famous that happiness begins to decline.

No. It was never like being famous was never like a goal for me you know what I mean and so I don't have like this this complicated thing where I was like I was trying to become famous and then I got famous and I realized being famous sucks I always thought being famous kind of would suck a little bit.

And so the idea that it is you know it's great in a lot of ways and it does suck in some ways but that's not honestly a thing that I have a very conflicted relationship with.

I've also been pretty famous since I was like 23 years old and get like it's been you know it's been a very long time since I got pretty famous so I've had a lot of different relationships with it throughout that time. You know almost 20 years I guess and where I've been at for quite some time has been a pretty

nice and I have a lot of famous friends. I see them have much rockier roads dealing with it than I do you know. Yeah and as far as success goes like no like if anything it's like great like we I get to work with the best you know the filmmakers

that inspired me to make movies in the first place I get to you know make you know they bring us Ninja try get to make a movie out of a thing I've loved since I was a kid we just sold a show to Apple that I'm writing and directing and starring in with my partner so we can come up with original ideas and do whatever the fuck we want you know and so what's the cost there's no cost if I felt guilty that I was not being a good father that would suck I do not have that feeling at all.

We have a closing tradition on this podcast where the last guest leaves a question for the next guest okay great not knowing who they're leaving it for we have a new tradition on this podcast which I'll talk to you about the question left for you.

Yeah okay the handwriting is not the best who left it I can't tell you the secret looking back on your love life okay can you see patterns in it good or bad and what was the greatest love of your life what did it feel like and how has it affected you up until this present

moment I guess this is a good time to slide back to you there you go Lauren yeah I mean I I made a whole movie about how I was not well liked in high school by women and yeah I was never.

No Lauren my wife was the first serious relationship I ever had I felt deeply in love with her very fast we essentially moved in together after like a week and almost have not spent any like significant

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time apart since then you know we've never broken up we've had any serious issue throughout the entire time we've been together which has been like 17 years or something like that. And if anything she is like really helped me do better work she's been a real supporter and also she herself is a brilliant writer and director filmmaker and she's been you know a very at times kind of direct voice in improving our work I think the most tangible thing is the movie neighbors and which we've talked about in the past which is our most successful movie we've made and and one of the things people really liked about it specifically was the relationship between me and Rose Burns character and how we are a couple you know traditionally in comedy for years of my entire childhood pretty much it's like the comedic dynamic of a married couple was they hated each other that was the joke they fucking hated each other they got on each other's nerves they didn't like spending time together. The woman was usually annoying the guy was usually cool and laid back. That was it. That was the comedic dynamic that essentially was like frozen into the movie you know forever and and Lauren was the one who was like what if it's like us and they fucking like each other and they both like to smoke weed and they both do stupid things and they both go out and party and I'm not telling you whoever did not do something fucking stupid if anything I'm doing stupid things to and we put that in the movie and it completely changed the dynamic and I honestly think it's like one of the reasons the movie became so like liked and successful and and so that's like a specific example and there's there's many like what's life like without her there. Thank God there's not a whole lot of life without her we hang out a lot and I don't really leave LA to make movies anymore honestly part of the reason is I just like spending time with her and and I don't like leaving Los Angeles as a result of it I used to travel much more to make movies and shoot movies in other cities and it sucked and I would go weeks we go weeks without seeing each other and and ultimately you're just like this isn't worth it like this is my life like this is like like I'm not like saving up to cash in on something later like I'm living my life not being surrounded by the people I want to be surrounded by so I can go make a movie and like that that that at times might be worth it but I've done everything I can to not have that happen and if you're willing to make a little less money you can more often than not shoot a movie in Los Angeles. It's funny when I asked you what makes life great and what makes life more human everything every answer you gave came with the second part of the sentence which was with friends with the person I love with every every answer was with people and so it's it's quite I think inspiring and important to hear that you're orientating your life now that you can so that it's surrounded by people. Yeah, I think it's always how I came up thank God and like I you know my parents had a lot of friends they was had people living with us in our house that were divorced or town that like it was I was it was in like I felt like I was in like a community and then I moved to LA and I like fell in with the community and I had my friend Evan and he moved in and we kind of made a little community and like comedy especially feet is like a is more of a team sport than other I think creative pursuits and it's it's funny like I remember years ago being at like that Vanity Fair Oscar party and it's like, you know, big crazy party everyone in Hollywood there and there's like one corner of the party where every comedian is and they're like all together in one little lump and like and and it was like and it was so

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funny and I was like no other genres like that like they're not it's like all the serious actors are together they're they're all spread out they're all talking to people but if you were a comedian you were in this one little like circle where you kind of felt safe you kind of felt inflated you kind of felt like you were with your people and that that community as far as work goes and I'm friends with like everyone I work with which is like great like the guys that you saw some party with I grew up with them the guy you know like the the the it like goes on and on and on and on like I tend to work with people that I've known a really long time and so when I'm working I'm getting to be with people that I that I genuinely care about and I'm friends with you know what a privilege yeah you're the first person to open this box great the first person to ever open this box this is a new tradition we're starting from here on out exciting all the guests that have been on this podcast all the questions they've written in this well they're in their own cards now they're on cards now fantastic yeah you got swag yeah cool the Diary of a CEO conversation cards you're gonna be you're gonna be I've put 20 of them there's 60 of them in total 60 or 100 of them in total I put 20 of them in here all I'm gonna ask you to do is to pick one at random yeah and then answer the question okay I'm gonna do it okay it's got a QR code hey it's out there handwriting what is the greatest gift another human has given you love also I got paid a lot of money to make green hornet so that was it's love though it's for sure love thank you sir the hardback version of your the paperback version of your book isn't is now out it's out and it's phenomenal thank you Larry it's phenomenal it's great I'm mostly didn't want to humiliate that was Michael I was talking about another friend of mine who's writing a book the other day and I was just like my whole goal was to for the book to come out and they're and to the general consensus to be that I'm not a fucking idiot which I did I feel I feel very secure with that thank you sir thank you now I've been a Huell drinker for about four years roughly so much so that I ended up investing in the company and I play a role on the board of the company but they also very kindly sponsored this podcast and to be honest I've never said this before but Huell believed in this podcast before anybody else the CEO Julian told me before we even launched the podcast how successful it would be and that Huell would back it and I absolutely have a huge amount of gratitude for them for that support but an even greater sense of gratitude for the fact that they've helped me stay nutritionally complete throughout the chaos and hecticness of my tremendously busy business schedule so if you haven't tried out Huell which I hope most of you have at least given it a go by now try it out it's an unbelievable way to try and stay nutritionally on course if you have a hectic busy schedule and let me know what you think send me a tweet and a dm tag me let me know what you think quick word from one of our sponsors I have to say I've been on a bit of a journey with this brand because when I started my business in new territories when we first moved social chain to New York City the first place we went to was WeWork we moved four of our team members out to New York City and we built the business from there

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I have to say there's something magical about WeWorks I've spent the last two or three weeks in LA in a WeWork and as you walk in the front door every day it's almost like that sense of community that sense of magic excitement camaraderie is tangible and you don't get that when you're working at home you don't get that often when you're sat in your bed on your laptop there's something about getting out and getting into a WeWork that makes me feel a sense of entrepreneurship and creativity and building and the way that we work to design both in the way that they offer subscriptions so that you can work on demand but also the flexibility of the contracts means that it's just the perfect place for businesses to scale their companies and if you haven't checked out WeWork and you want to you can go to we.co.co and there you can get 50% off a trial day at WeWork close to you you