

**[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Moment 118 - The Ultimate Gift
YOU Should Be Offering Each & Every Friend: Simon Sinek**

I don't wait for the phone to ring.
I call a friend and say, do you have a minute?
Can I talk?
And if a friend is ill-equipped, if they start fixing, I'll interrupt the conversation and say, listen, I love you.
This is not what I need right now.
I love you.
I love you.
I'm going to get off the phone right now, okay?
Because when they go into fix-it mode, it actually makes me feel worse sometimes.
The friends that are some of the best-equipped people are folks in the military.
They know how to manage shit better than almost anybody I know.
I've cried with more people in uniform than I've ever cried with people in suits.
And the way that we talk to each other, like, I have a friend who's a general.
I've known him for a million years, so it's been fun to watch his career.
He's now a general.
And when we say goodbye to each other, we say, I love you.
And when we get on the phone with each other, if it's been a long gap, he'll say to me, hey, man, first of all, he calls me brother, hey, brother, right?
Which means something.
Hey, brother, I really miss you.
And he says things that a lot of guys don't say to each other, you know?
He talks to me like sometimes I talk to my female friends.
It's full of emotion.
It's full of honesty.
And there's no machismo whatsoever.
And yet he's a warrior.
He's a combat veteran, you know?
And he'll say, hey, man, I miss you.
It's been a while.
I go, yeah, I miss you too.
And then we'll get off the phone and say, hey, I love you.
I mean, I love you too.
I'll talk to you soon.
And though he will, I mean, he and there, this is a small group like him, you know, I would call him in my darkest times and I know he would call me.
I have another friend and he's going through some shit and I'm honored that when I called him and said, hey, I haven't talked to him or what you've been going through.
You know, I just realized I haven't talked to him in a while and I'm like, hey, what you've been going through?
And he just let it all out.
And I could hear the frustration.
I could hear the pain and I didn't try and fix it.

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I just encouraged him to keep talking.

What else?

Go on.

Tell me more.

What else?

Oh my God.

That must, that's really, go on.

Yeah.

What else?

And just sat in the mud with him and it was an, it was an honor.

I'll tell you it was an honor that he felt comfortable enough to do that.

Because I guarantee it.

He like so many are really good at hiding it, faking it, suppressing it.

He's a pro.

In fact, I'm sure he is where he is partially because he's a pro.

And you know, if you have the skill set to hold space for someone, you will have an amazing sense of gratitude that your friends trusted you and loved you enough that they would go there in front of you.

And I think that's a standard that we should strive for.

And like I said, we're also preoccupied with ourselves, you know?

There's no greater honor.

There's no great honor than being able to serve a friend in need.

When I see, you know, a friend sees you sat in the mud.

A friend sees me sat in the mud.

The ill-informed love reaction is to try and get me out of the mud.

Of course.

Well-intentioned.

I don't knock it.

I know it's well-intentioned.

How do I get out of the mud?

The reason I ask that question is because I know there's someone listening to this right now who is sat in the mud.

In many respects in my life, I'm sat in the mud.

The thing we're all looking for is we want empathy in the fact that we're sat in the mud, of course, but we're desperate for a way out of the mud, right?

That's understandable.

Where does the plan come from?

How do we get out of the mud?

So if it were a prescription, you and I wouldn't have to work anymore.

On the subject matter of loneliness, because it's easier to focus on.

Right.

So I think in large part, like any cooperative effort, like any relationship, and a friendship is a relationship, having colleagues is a relationship.

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In some part, it's co-created, right?

You want to show up in any kind of relationship, professional or personal, and make it a co-creation.

I think when somebody first calls you, I don't think they're looking for solutions.

They're looking for companionship and catharsis.

They're just looking not to feel overwhelmed.

And at some point, you can either ask, can I offer some pointers or you're not ready for that yet?

No, I'm not ready for that yet.

Versus, yeah, yeah, go ahead.

Or the person will ask themselves, you know, what do you think?

What do you think?

How do I, like, what do I do?

You know?

Or I'll know what to do, but I don't want to do it.

Like I know what to do.

I just need to do this.

And the person can just say, I'll do it with you and just offer, again, companionship.

Most of us, believe it or not, have more knowledge about how to get out of it than we think.

Because we've dispensed the advice in the past, probably.

I think most of us have a sense, like, it's, again, I think part of it is allowing ourselves to feel the feels.

You know, I think if I suppress the feelings, they would last longer.

But allowing myself to feel the feels, I know is part of the solution.

You know?

It's like, if you try and suppress feelings, it makes, it's just, it's not good.

Yeah.

You know what I mean?

They're signals, right?

They're signals.

They're just signals.

That's all they are.

The other thing is like, maybe it's, maybe all of my loneliness is telling me is like,

Simon, you idiot, just get some sleep.

Maybe that's all it's telling me.

Maybe I'm feeling lonely is because I'm just fricking exhausted.

Turns out I've been sleeping better and turns out I feel better.

You know?

Maybe I've been eating crap.

You know?

Maybe I'm full of fricking sugar and fat.

The social expectations play a role.

I am this age and I should be this by now.

Oh, I think we have to say yes, right?

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And like, the midlife crisis is a known thing and you sort of expect, you know, you hit middle life and you're like, all right, you're going to start evaluating everything. You know, you're receding hairline, you're sagging body. You know, you're in a new comedian's joke about it. We joke about it. But I think the new thing is the quarter life crisis. You know, the number of friends that I have that are in their mid-twenties or like barely pushing 30 and they are suffering all the things that somebody in their midlife would suffer and their evaluation is different. It's not like, oh my God, I'm closer to the day I'm going to die than the day I was born. It's not that. It's more like, oh my God, I'm at this age and I haven't achieved all the things I said I was going to achieve or I'm just getting started. And I think now the quarter life crisis is like a real thing. And unfortunately older generations scoff at it, you know? But I think it's based, that is very much societal expectation. Like I'm supposed to be here. Like the number of young people I know who I say, you're entry level. Don't worry if you're running the place yet. Just even if this is a bad job, if it's toxic, get out. But there's very few jobs that are super toxic, you know, if you just have a bad boss, like stick with this and learn. Like the learning you're going to get from a bad, like my first boss was a bad boss. And I was there for a year and a half and it was one of the best educations I got. And by the way, the camaraderie that I built my team because we all shared the same bad boss was amazing, right? So I learned teamwork. I learned having each other's back. I learned people taking care of each other. We learned how to manage and how not to do things. I didn't just abandon it because my boss was bad. My point is, is when I say stuff like that to young people, they immediately interpret that as the worst advice ever because I'm wasting time. Or take a gap year. I can't. I'm wasting time. Like wasting time from what? Like what race are you, who are you comparing yourself to? What standard like, you know, I won't achieve the thing by, by, by what? Like what imaginary scale are we working on here? You know, but there is this very clear imaginary scale by which younger people, young people are pegging their life against. And the only thing I can offer is my own, is my own experience.

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And I know it's the worst thing to do because, you know, when you're in it, you're in it. Nobody can think that far ahead, but I, and it's fun to think about, right? Because I remember when I was young in my career and things were just starting to move, though this one guy I used to go to for advice who was very much more successful than me, really buttoned up, really sort of, you know, operations oriented. And he would constantly give me advice that either, he was basically either telling me I was an idiot or made me feel like an idiot by all the things I wasn't doing or wasn't doing right or should be doing or could be doing, but it never felt right to me. And he would say stupid things to me like, I won't get out of bed for X amount of thousands of dollars. I'm like, I do stuff for free all the time, you know? And if I didn't have my sense of purpose and cause, if I didn't have my North Star, my why, my vision to guide me, I would have listened to him and it would have been to my detriment because he was very finite minded and it was very sort of like hit this target, hit this target. And thank goodness I ignored all the advice and flash forward, my career has completely eclipsed his. It just took longer. And that's the point is, the point is, is that the reason people don't follow my ideas, the reason people reject my books is because they want my advice or they want my perspective to work this year. And you'll hear, I've used this analogy all the time. Like I will tell you how to get into shape. I will tell you have to exercise 20 minutes a day every day. You have to eat healthy and you can have, you can only have sugar in days that start with S, you know, I like what Mark Hyman says, which is, you know, treat sugar like a recreational drug, you know? And if you do these things 100%, you will be in shape and you'll be healthy 100%. Nobody wants that book, right? But the problem is you have to do it. And there will, somebody will say, well, when will I be in shape? And the answer is, I don't know. 100% it works. I don't know when. And when I discovered the why, and I first articulated the why, and this is also important, it wasn't just the why, I also discovered Emmett Rogers' work on the law of diffusion of innovations, which I did write about also in Start With Why, that combination of starting with Y and following the law of diffusion, I realized that 100% it was going to work. By starting with Y, I was going to attract early adopters and early adopters would make the tipping point. I didn't know when I just knew it would work and I just stuck with it. And I, and I disconnected myself from any arbitrary, time-based achievement, which freaks people out, especially if you're on a quarterly or annual financial schedule.

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But I disconnected, I knew it would work and I just stuck with it.

Turns out it worked.

Some of it worked quicker than I expected, some of it worked slower than I expected, but it worked.

And young people, myself included, when I was their age, I'm not saying I had some like, I was 100% the same, it had to be a discovery for me.

And that discovery didn't come to my early 30s.

So my 20s were me being that person going, you're an idiot, I can't waste time.

But there's something magical about being on the path and just sticking, just sticking, just being disciplined and just sticking to, and a funny thing is, as we're talking about this, I don't even, I don't think of myself as a disciplined person.

I'm actually very undisciplined.

Like I'm, I don't have an exercise regime.

Like, like I go in and out sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't.

And I'm just not a very disciplined person.

And I have so much, I have so much respect for people who are super disciplined when they commit themselves to something, they do it and they're just really good at sticking to the plan.

I'm useless at sticking to the plan, right?

And, but I'm realizing now the only discipline I had was I trusted in these two theories, starting with why and law of diffusion.