

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Moment 121: "This ONE Small Thing Makes Me So Grateful That I Cry!" - Fearne Cotton

Bigger than us. The book is largely centred on this idea of meaning, right? That's the kind of overarching purpose for writing the book. It's trying to find meaning in a messy world. And at the end of the book in part four, you start to conclude that, you know, the real meaning in life is connection in its various forms. So I guess my question for you is, what is it that for you now is bringing meaning in your life? What does meaning mean to you in your life now? And yeah, where do you find it?

I find it in really simple places, like going for a walk. And that sounds a bit too sort of casual and flippant, but I do. I try and go for a walk every day. And I went for a walk this morning super early. It was summer still rising. It was pissing with rain. It's bloody horrible. But when I'm out, I might be listening to music. I might go without my phone and just walk. This could sound very cheesy, but I'm often brought to tears because I extract myself from the, oh my God, my kids are late for school, or I haven't done this email, or how am I doing with this, or what's failing with that, or just let it all go. And I'm lucky to live near a very green space, so I can walk around and look at trees and see there's green parrots in the park and whatever else is going on in nature, and be humbled by it, because it's humbling when you really notice it. Or at night, look at the sky. If you're lucky to live in an area where there isn't too much light pollution and see one star, that might not even be there anymore because we can't talk about physics. It's going to blame my head off. But you know what I mean?

Look at the greatness of what is going on around us rather than at your phone or the smallness of, oh my God, my house is a shit, how everything's messy. And look outside of that. I have to do that every day so I don't get bogged down with, am I doing this right? Where do I fit into society? How successful am I? All of this greatness. And how short life is, how short life is, and that in 200 years none of us are going to be here. That's humbling. It's not bleak, that's humbling to get up every day and think there's a whole new generation, like people and things that we're happening and systems in place and technology or whatever it might be, that I won't be around for. So I have to get up and be grateful and do all that stuff I want to do today. Not next year when I'm braver, in 20 years when I'm older and quirkiest and more eccentric. I've got to do it now. So I have to find that meaning connection. This is bespoke, it'll be different for everyone, but for looking at the bigger everything. Noticing that I'm on a floating ball in space. Noticing that all of this is changing always and that there are trees thousands of years old and I'm just 40 and what do I fucking know? I have to get myself out of this small structure that we've created on a societal level and look at the hugeness of all of it. And remember when you look at that hugeness that we know, fuck all. Because we can't even get our heads around the fact,

like what is infinity? How? No, I can't even go there. We don't know anything. We know nothing. And we have to keep coming back to that. As soon as we start going, yeah, I know everything about this and that. I know more than you. Small, small lives, small. I want big, expansive, I don't know anything. I'm here to learn. Here to learn. Yeah. And I won't be in however many years. So gratitude.

It's funny because, I mean, yeah, what you're saying is just beautiful and very, very true and powerful. But from that, I was, I was, I was realizing that my own self-importance is a curse, right? So like, if I log into Instagram, the little like thing will tell me how important I am today and then I'll get sucked into that. Or if I'm a good enough mother, because I didn't pack

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the right thing for sports day. And it's like the system we've created, the kind of like matrix we live in sucks us into believing our own self-importance and that, you know, the color of my, my nails really is consequential to anything. And as you look up at the stars, you realize that you are just a spec. The universe doesn't really give a fuck about you. And that is liberation. It's liberation from all the pettiness that consumes our mind. But I also think as much as we are, I don't want to use the word insignificant, but as tiny as we are in the grand, grand scheme of things, I also, alongside that, truly believe that we are supported by all of this greatness, not necessarily by the societal structures that we see and that we are told about constantly, but something bigger, something inexplicable, something that you might not even be able to label or want to label. But I do believe that there is support there. And what does that mean for you? Because you start to write about this in the book. Well, I have never aligned with a religion. So it's harder to talk about it eloquently. Because when there's the infrastructure of religion, you can talk about a God, a way of being and a system that works, which is beautiful. I've never had that growing up. I've never aligned or felt drawn to it. But I deeply feel that I can communicate with the world around me, which in turn, when you get on this sort of macro micro micro level is within you. It's all the same thing. We are made of the same stuff. So that might link to non religious prayer and having a communication with that something bigger. It might also be the law of attraction, which you touched upon earlier, where you are manifesting the things that you're cognitively thinking about and focusing on, you're seeing more of what you're focusing on. So, you know, look for red cars when you stop listening to this, you'll see bloody loads, like look and see what you're wanting in your life, and more of it will appear. Lots of the things that talk about in the book describe and support that notion that there is something bigger at play that we are part of, that we can feel supported by, which will hopefully then, you know, eradicate loneliness or people feel disconnected from the world around us and then force more into sort of habitual negative cycles or whatever it might be. So there are lots of ways I think you can tap into it and that you can explore it and have fun with it. It's exciting, like doing a little ritual in the rituals chapter. I love doing rituals. That's such a gorgeous way of honouring a moment for you to place meaning into something, for you to seek the meaning, find it and honour it. There's meaning in everything. We just, it just passes by because we're in a bloody rush. So hopefully in the book, I go through lots of different ways in which I, you know, I can articulate what that means to me and some of it might resonate with you, some of it might not. But for me, I found each subject very exciting. It was a new communication tool to communicate with everything around me. The way you approach those topics as well, you approach it in a very humble way and a way that feels very inclusive in the book. So like, I could investigate the idea of like non-religious prayer because it didn't feel like wishy-washy. You described it in a very human way as being you're speaking, you're kind of putting your thoughts out there. You don't know who you're doing it to. But you know, a lot of people when they write about these topics would probably give it a name and a place, whatever. So it felt very, very relatable. And I actually probably, when I was reading that thought, I could see how non-religious prayer would help me in my life. Yeah. What is non-religious prayer? I'm so glad that you've said this because that was my whole aim for this book was for this to be everyday stuff. Yeah, exactly. It's not woo-woo. It's not exclusive to a certain demographic who can afford to do it or they're in the right time and place

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to do it. This is, we can all do, this is the basics. This is the basics of life that we're sort of ignoring. And it's the simple and it's the fun and it's the curious. And they're the things that we usually lose because we're in a bloody rush. So non-religious prayer, which my friend Donna Lancaster has taught me about beautifully, I was probably already doing it to an extent because I've always had some sort of communication with sometimes I'll say dear universe or whatever or sometimes I just speak or I'm just in my head. Like before I go to bed now, I'm more sort of disciplined about it in the fact that I'll put my head on the pillow and I'll say, first of all, a prayer of thanks for whatever's gone that day or just the general state of how I am, I'm healthy, I'm in a warm bed. God, thank you for that. Like whoever you're talking to, thank you for my warm bed. I'm so lucky. Then I'll go through a list of people that I want to send a message of prayer to, you know, whether it's someone that's in need of help, of support, and that they find some comfort. And then I'll go to the trickier bit, which is to ask for something that I need. And I find that bit sometimes quite hard again because of everything we've talked about. I deserve this. I deserve a little help in this department or some guidance. And I think as long as you think of it as a fun, curious thing to do, what's the harm in it? You're not signing up to some sort of like new religion or cult that you're joining, it's a fun thing to try to have and watch for the results. That's what I would say. Be curious in what happens next. And the guidance, if you're looking for the signs that appear, like weird coincidences and stuff that happens, that you can't ignore. You can't ignore them. The signs are everywhere if you've got your eyes open.

Some people are just so unwilling to step outside of the measurable. And what I mean by that is, well, I can't, you know, I've got KPIs for my life, so if I post on Instagram, I need likes. If I do this, I need money. If I do this, I need this. What you're talking about there is going for a walk in the park. How do I measure the return on investment? If I do a prayer at night time, how do I measure that this is working? What do you say to people that think in that school of thought, which is a lot of people, specifically men?

I would say measure how good you feel, measure how like talking about how connected you feel is difficult because you can't quantify that. You can't see it. You know, it hasn't got a flavor or a color. What is that feeling of connection? So first of all, look at all the times where you felt disconnected. We can all remember a time where you felt hugely disconnected from other people, from nature, when you are buying shit you don't need, disconnected from the natural beauty that is around us, when you're bored and you're sat around thinking, life, shit, they're all moments of disconnection. So just when you feel the opposite of that, you're getting the return. And also, I think we've got to stop looking at the return. We've got to start looking at just being. And it's not always about being the best, the most successful, having the most, whatever it is, quantifying anything and it being the most. It's about being part of a huge network of people and animals. Please, can we not forget those beautiful animals out there that we're just totally disregarding all day, every day, who have probably more of a right to be on this planet than we do. We are part of a huge mass of connectivity. And we can feel the beauty of that. We can feel that energy pulsing through us whenever we choose to. We deny ourselves of it all day, every day. And we're about the singular, the insular. What can I get? What can I do for me? It's not global. Parts of the world, more so in the East, still have much more connection,

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obviously, to nature, but also to community, to each other, to not looking for a social pecking order to be part of something. When you feel part of something, you feel alive. And it hasn't got to be like you being at a party with loads of people, but you're feeling part of a movement, a collective in a non-exclusive way. It's not about then others being outside of that. Feeling part of something, just feeling your connection to nature. That is a beautiful starting point in any day to feel that connection. The rest is a bonus. If you can feel that, that is a lovely, lovely thing. It's not a return like what can nature give me, what can other people give me? How can I feel part of this rather than separate from it? Our separateness has caused us so much pain and we don't even see it.