



Titans as Teens

Transcript: Andrew Murray Dunn

The podcast is here:

<https://www.titansasteens.com/andrew-murray-dunn-wellness-technology-advisor/>

[Theme music]

Brody [00:00:04] Hey, all Brody here with the new episode of Titans as Teens, a podcast where I have detailed conversations with interesting people from all walks of life, about their team experience and the knowledge they have for teens today. Today, I have the pleasure of speaking with entrepreneur Andrew Dunn.

Andrew [00:00:22] You're walking down the street and you're crossing paths with a stranger. Imagine if you had some augmented reality glasses where you could see, the totality of that person's life, the gifts they have, the wisdom they have, the things they have, the things they need. And they could see yours. And they're just like so much value that can be exchanged if we are curious enough to learn about someone else.

Brody [00:00:47] Andrew is a fantastic entrepreneur and tech advisor, founding Siempo and working on numerous other projects. My conversation with Andrew focused mainly on spirituality and emotions, as I realized that he knew an immense amount about those things. Andrew was one of the most eloquent and inspiring people I've had the privilege to talk to, and I hope you enjoy listening to him as much as I did. Here's my conversation with Andrew Dunn.

Andrew [00:01:12] I was born in Manhattan.

[00:01:14] I moved to the suburbs when I was one or two and for the most part had a fairly joyful, youthful, safe upbringing in a more affluent suburb where there were good schools and lots of activities. We were I guess in a bit more of a rural part of the suburbs, so getting out into parks and nature more. And there was definitely a bit of an energy, of a pressure of expectation, being in a town where a lot of my friend's parents were doctors, lawyers, business people. And the college conversation started pretty early. Talking about PSAT and extracurriculars in early high school and encouraged to play sports and be on student council in middle school. And my parents taking the extra opportunity to teach me things that maybe elementary school wasn't teaching me at the time, so I was able to, quote unquote, get ahead in certain academic disciplines. There is this ambient sense of: life is sweet. We got to travel and do all these things, but that I wasn't really living my own life and that there was kind of this expectation of me. And I think that was both from family, from society, from peer pressure. And I think that started to gnaw at me a little bit. And there were moments of existential angst experienced throughout my early teens. Whereas like, what's the point of all this? Like, why am I studying so hard for this thing? It's extrapolating like if I if I don't ace this test, then I won't get into that class and I won't get into that school and the...da da da. What does that actually matter in the larger scheme of



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the universe? So, there are some thoughts like that. And I gravitated to some weird things like UFOs and aliens.

[00:03:11] Yeah, I think I was kind of like going through life and things were all right. But I had a feeling that there was something more. And it took me a while to really open to that journey, the exploration of finding what was there and finding out for myself what was true. And that's really been the story of my last five, 10 years.

Brody [00:03:35] Super interesting, because it sounds like to me, you did what a lot of people think about doing. You actually took the step and broke away from all those other pressures and really just became your own person.

Andrew [00:03:49] Yeah, yeah. That's a really great way to describe it. People say: yay, travel while you're young or follow your passion. There's a lot of forces that don't want you to do that. Subtle and not so subtle, and I definitely am grateful for the various privileges that allowed me the sense of empowerment to try those things, whether it was class privileges that allowed me to take a little time off after college, or various race, gender presenting privileges that allowed me to travel alone in certain places and kind of get lost without the fear of my safety. And I kind of had a feeling we might get into the privilege conversation at some point, because I think it's actually a big part of my story. And generally it's been a journey of feeling shame and confusion and then transmuting that into more acceptance and empowerment and starting to be grateful for all of these challenges through childhood, like that I had a lot of pressure to jump through the hoops of academic and professional success like that was really life draining and it also forced me to search deeper and to open to that journey y that a lot of people don't take.

Brody [00:05:10] I feel like a lot of people I know, at least and I'm sure most teens can connect with you on that. And it's stressful. But do you think that it's best for everyone to break out of it and do something similar to what you did? Or is it different for every person?

Andrew [00:05:31] I really don't know what's best for everyone, I know what's best for myself, or at least I'm constantly recalibrating and discovering what's in the highest good for me to do with my moment to moment choices.

Andrew [00:05:45] I definitely stumbled trying to convince other people to do certain things. And I think that's part of my path. There're ways in which I want to change other people and control other people because of just various developmental traumas. I've experienced various ancestral traumas I've experienced that I hold. And just behavioral patterns. I struggle with popularity at different times throughout middle school and high school. And so, there's a way in which I want to be seen for something cool that I'm now doing. And that's actually hurt some of the long-term relationships I've had friends, family, etc., Because people kind of don't want to be told what to do. They don't want to be pressured and controlled. And so, for me to try to do that is out of alignment. And what I've been getting better at doing is like showing versus telling and just being a living embodiment of the things I value and just doing the things I like to do. And if other people see me feeling joyful around that and they resonate with it and they want to learn more,



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they talk to me and that's cool. But it's a different energy than someone who just read this amazing book. And it's just like, oh my God, everyone you have to do is you have to do this. You have to do this.

Brody [00:07:02] I think maybe the best way to understand this in the best way to transition is to go back to high school or teen life.

Andrew [00:07:10] Yeah,

Brody [00:07:11] You talked about not being popular in middle school and high school. What did that look like?

Andrew [00:07:16] I'd say there were waves of it. I switched schools in fifth grade. I never never felt the sense of unpopularity in elementary school. I think it was almost like this this era when, like every everyone was cool with everyone and then switching to a new school and being kind of a late bloomer and maybe not dressing a certain way. Yeah, there were there were moments throughout middle school where I definitely felt kind of lonely and other. But for the most part I had a solid friend group. And then there was like a huge surge in popularity at some point in middle school. And I was really enjoying that. And I think I also actually - this is actually the first time describing like this - I think I abused that power in a way. It was it was kind of a time when people started dating and hooking up and I had a lot of interest in me. And I guess I wasn't super genuine and transparent with what some of the people that I was starting to date and that kind of a bit me. And then transitioning into high school. Yeah, I think it became more of a function of like, OK, then like a freshman, when people started getting their driver's licenses, partying a bit more, I was I was still kind of stuck in a very serious academic route. And so, I wasn't really able to hang as much. There were just times where I didn't have the highest self-esteem. I think that was me feeling trapped in this world where, like, I had to do all this stuff I had no interest in doing and that which I sought felt out of reach. And I think a lot of people after high school's over through college, like they tend to gloss over what their high school experience was. At least that's been my experience. And it's actually been a kind of healing for me to be able to talk about. Like, yeah, I actually didn't really like high school very much. You know, I had friends in different places, and I wound up having a really amazing core group of friends towards the very end. For the most part, it was really taxing and like soul sucking. And I wasn't really exploring myself, expressing myself. It's not like - not to make it bad or wrong. It's just like that was part of my journey, which was like I really closed myself off to a lot of life during that period. And if I could go back and do things differently, I think I would have spoken my truth more, connected with people, with classmates who didn't look like me or didn't think like me. Taken more risks. And not to reject, like studying for the SAT and playing the sport and doing extracurricular, but to have a better integration of them.

[00:10:00] I think in teenagers lives there's a tendency to rebel against parents and society. And I think there's a lot of wisdom in taking on these different identities and perspectives and awarenesses and going through the process. I also feel like there's a way to integrate all of them, because I really do believe that all perspectives are true and



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partial. So, what your parents say or what the West says, it's not that it's inherently wrong or bad or evil. It is a natural expression of 13.8 billion years of evolution that has worked for some people and they felt moved to act and behave in a certain way and create certain structures. And it's not I don't think it serves to throw all that out and completely reject it. I think it's important to meet it and understand it and synthesize it with whatever you're learning on your journey, and I think that that's an outlook that's transcendent and includes meta-modern integral outlook that is really good medicine for our time when we're stuck in such bipartisan gridlock and narrative warfare like black, white, good, bad left, right. It's like we can only see one or the other when that's just not how the universe works.

[00:11:25] There's infinite shades of gray and fluidity. And I really feel that the like the capital T truth is in the space between and the way that we get there is by being curious and being able to see and hear each other, which is hard. Like we don't really learn that stuff in school. Maybe they're teaching EQ now, but they weren't when it was...

Brody [00:11:41] No, not at least where I go.

Andrew [00:11:47] (laughs).

Brody [00:11:48] And I think it's really an interesting perspective that you have, like, crazy. I'm very glad that I'm having you on. Because, like, it's probably the best answer I've ever heard to that question that I asked. But I think a harder question for you might be to ask if you could go back, and not saying what you currently think of your high school self, but what would your high school self think of you today?

Andrew [00:12:15] What my high school self think of me today. The first thing that comes to mind is joy, excitement, pride. There have definitely been times in my life I'm now thinking of a college era, where I dreaded what was going to come next. I actually remember a moment, senior year of college, when I hadn't secured a job. I was like sometime in the spring. And I was kind of confused on what to do because my classmates were going on to prestigious jobs. And I think I was a little stoned, and I had this huge blast of sadness. And I teared up for the first time in a while by myself - like I think I had become - I had tears up in other contexts with partners and stuff. But this is the first time I was alone and just felt this wave of sadness over how I thought that I was going to have to go and basically spend the next 50 years doing something I had no interest in doing in order to be accepted in society and move along in life. And so, it was kind of a story of the best years are over. It was almost like a death.

[00:13:33] And so that was when I was twenty-one, twenty-two, I just turned 30 and I found myself saying how it keeps getting better, the older I get. There have been so many experiences that have just been beyond imagination. Basically, what I wanted when I was in middle school thinking about like what's the point of the universe type stuff? Like I've had a lot more of those experiences through a whole different set of modalities and communities and people. And so, I just never expected that life could be so good and. It's also like in this moment, I actually feel kind of stuck. There's a lot of confusion, ambivalence, and it doesn't mean I'm back at square one or something like I can still



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appreciate, like all the other experiences I've had and trust in whatever is unfolding and look at like, what am I to learn right now? I really feel like I mean, not to get too metaphysical, but one of the stories that I've come across a handful of times, I think it's a pretty common story in a lot of indigenous cultures, is that we choose to be born into this life with these parents in this place and this time with these struggles and challenges. Like our soul is like this thing that's out there and we choose to be born in a three-dimensional body. And then everything in this lifetime - everything - is here to teach us how to love and to teach us the things that are soul needs on a broader soul journey. And so awful things happen, certain people come into our lives, there's like all these things that are seemingly coincidental or synchronous and or unexplainable. And so, it just one story that I've started to appreciate, that one that I hold like this is what I believe because I don't think you can know for sure. But it's just been this kind of openness to: oh, yeah. Like what if. Everything here is to teach me something like what can I learn from everything that happens?

Brody [00:15:47] Yeah, that reminds me, when I was speaking with Neil Strauss the other day, he was talking about his favorite story, which is, just going to simplify it, every time a bad thing happens, the person who it happens to just says: maybe it's a bad thing. And then it goes, it flashes forward maybe a year. And then it turns out to be a good thing, you know.

Andrew [00:16:09] Totally.

Brody [00:16:09] Like, oh, it's you can never tell. And until- with hindsight.

Andrew [00:16:13] And say one more thing about that? Life is so multidimensional that we often ascribe meaning and value to things on a plane of maybe success or on money or on reputation, social capital. There's just so many things that we actually don't place a lot of value on, like namely nature, namely emotional qualities, spiritual qualities.

Brody [00:16:43] What how has your relationship to money changed over the years?

Andrew [00:16:47] Oh, my God. Did you read my most recent blog post?

Brody [00:16:49] I have, yeah. That's why I asked.

Andrew [00:16:51] OK, great. That's a long answer. Or it could be a long answer. I think the short version is that money has been a huge thing in my life, like this huge force that has shaped my choices and therefore my life. And growing up around a lot of money, there were often feelings of confusion of, I don't understand why we have this, but other people don't. And then have the scarcity of like we have a lot, but those people over there have a lot more. And I guess I'm supposed to just try to accumulate as much as possible. I have a job that makes the most money so I can, like, strike it rich so I can have all these things that my family has given to me. But they also have more than them and so that I can live the dopest life and live the good life. And. It only recently, even though I've been doing all this work for the last five, 10 years, even with my last company there was still holding out on, yeah, we want to be like more mission driven impact, like prioritize doing



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something good for the world, but still like it would be dope if I made a billion dollars doing this. And so I'm going to like orient around that in terms of our business model and the story we tell investors, because that would signal to other people that I have done something worthy, that I have reached a certain level of success, and I still find myself constantly comparing myself to friends who have raised more money or who have made more money. And it's a funny thing. So, there's like others like generator functions. And then there's like relationship to where the money I have come from. And there's a community called Resource Generation that organizes young people with wealth for social change. And the perspective they hold is that all wealth is built on stolen land and labor. And I've also heard other quotes, of like, the source of all capital is nature. And I can agree with those perspectives and I don't think they're the only perspectives, but they're important to understand the history of how capital has been created and who was and wasn't able to participate in those systems and the expense that others incurred for others to make that capital.

[00:19:17] And so it gets really tricky. And it can be overwhelming to then figure out, OK, well, I have this what do I do with it? Like, some people want me to do this. I think I want to do that, but I'm not really sure. I want to make sure I have enough for my family. I don't want to be left behind because society doesn't really take good care of people who don't make money. And what will my friends think, will I be banished from the tribe if I start thinking differently. So, I've been through a whole process and I think it's going to be a lifelong journey because it's been such a big theme in my life.

[00:19:52] But in this moment, I am really fortunate, extremely fortunate that my family has valued education. And so, they created savings, income, wealth for me to study at a private university to get a good education. And I'm extremely fortunate that, not fortunate, just randomly lucky, that I joined an early stage startup that wound up doing pretty well by conventional success metrics. And I had the awareness just a year or two ago, like, wow, this is now worth something. It'll probably be worth a lot more in five or 10 years, but it's worth a lot right now. I could do a lot of really creative things with this. I could sponsor therapy for my friend who needs it. I could help my friend's start up get off the ground. I could donate to this cause I really care about. So, the last year or two has been leaning into that bit more. Being like: What is the dopest use of money. And it's not like I, I have had thoughts of like let me give everything away. Like, I trust that I'll be supported. I can always make more if I need it. My lifestyle has become more and more frugal as I have stop living by myself or with one roommate, I've started living in a community where we share meals and we pay less rent - don't have to live in the city.

[00:21:20] So there's a lot of things that are changing. But yeah, I'm trying to figure out like what is the highest use of the resources I have access to, not just financial capital, but social capital, material capital, etc., And I want to get creative, because I really want to inspire not only folks who are in my position, like they've worked in tech, so they have, you know, some amount of money and savings, but they don't have children or partner and they're not really sure what they're saving for. I want to be a role model for like "hey" here's all the dope ways that you could support projects around you, that are creating a new world, that are teaching you something. Like there's so many things that we're not valuing.



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We're only looking at that bottom-line return value when back the way it was before, life is so much more multi-dimensional than that. And if we start to think about it like, oh, well, if I invest or give this amount and to my friends project, maybe I'll make something back. But if nothing else, I'm going to learn a lot. I'm doing this person a huge kind gesture. I'm going to feel a sense of purpose. It might lead to new relationships. There's just so many things that, like you said, like we don't know until way, we might not know for 50 years if it was the quote unquote right idea or what the value was. But so anyway to tie this in the bow, I'm really inspired to explore innovative forms of moving money and then to do that with more people and then to share those stories outwards.

Brody [00:23:00] I mean, it's really crazy to me how many people just don't think about it, you know, they're like, I just want money so I can have money. I just I just want it. That's because it's because society wants me to have money or society tells me I want to have money. So, I want money. Right. But what happened to you, and I think that's what happened to other people, once they actually get it, they're like: now what? I'm not any happier. I have the money. I don't have to worry about things, but. What now?

Andrew [00:23:31] Yeah.

Brody [00:23:32] And it just really reminds me of this old Greek philosopher, Epicurus, who his philosophy epicureanism, excuse me, is based around: life is two things. First thing is you find a way to live so you don't starve. You find a way to live by your means. And then you live in a commune with your friends for the rest of your life, because that's what's fulfilling. And that was Epicureanism. Yeah. It's kind of reminds me of that.

Andrew [00:24:07] I didn't realize that's what I was about, but I'm hearing balance in that which is like it's important to have your basic needs covered. And right now, we live in a society where the state doesn't necessarily do that. So, it's important that we figure out ways to do that. And then the community piece is really interesting in the way that ties in, because when living in a community, you no longer need to go out to the marketplace to do things that you don't really care about or even really want at the end of the day, in order to create the income so you can live a certain way, because you're sharing more resources and the things that you might otherwise be paying for are available for free within that community. And so, yeah, sounds like it's pretty, pretty visionary.

Brody [00:24:57] Yeah. I mean, sadly, like most Greek philosophers, it worked for 50 years and then shit happened so...

Andrew [00:25:06] Well, that tends to be the whole dance of history, where something - there's like a cycle and...

Brody [00:25:14] You see you see it in government, and you see it in philosophy and everything.

Andrew [00:25:18] There's a natural response to the emergence of something. And it goes through the cycle of like early adopters, birth, maturity, then decline as something new



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comes through. And so that's just the way things work. Nothing like no civilization has lasted forever. No businesses lasted forever. No mountain has lasted forever. But we kind of live as if they could. And do everything that's possible and create laws around the perpetuation of something at all costs.

Brody [00:25:53] Yeah, I mean, it draws on a bigger question that I don't think we should touch on because we'll be here for another hour. But yeah.

Andrew [00:26:03] What what's the question?

Brody [00:26:04] Like what how do we make a meaningful impact on the world? And do we have to?

Andrew [00:26:11] OK, well, those are two separate questions. I just want to recommend this one philosopher named Forrest Landry, he has a book called The Effective Choice. And I memorized one of the aphorisms, which is: "An effective choice, is optimal in supporting creativity, experience, wholeness and integrity. And effective choice supports both self and world. It allows the greatest freedom to be and to become, to choose and choose again'. So, like that framework, as I have, nodding to the multi dimensionality of things. But at the end of the day, you don't have to do anything at all. You don't have to even survive. So, what do you do? And I think it's important that we listen to both the egoic needs for survival and pursue that more rational material, heady. Let me figure out how to navigate the world and create a life for me. But I think it's also important to listen to the body and to our intuition, more of the feminine energy of what really feels true and natural to do.

[00:27:27] There's an author, a thinker named Charles Eisenstein, who's been gaining popularity recently. And we were at a dinner and we were talking about the state of the world and all the things that are going wrong, and he invited us to consider that on the larger scale things, maybe the moment of connecting with the beauty of a hummingbird, like drinking nectar from a flower, maybe that is more important and valuable at the end of the day than whatever it is that we are perceiving is so good or bad or whatever. And so that's what struck me, because we really do choose where to put our attention and some of the adages like: don't dwell on it or look on the bright side.

[00:28:16] Yeah, there's lots of sides to everything that happens from lots of different perspectives. And the more that we dwell on our subjective experience, then the more we are unable to see the whole picture and appreciate what's happened and learn from it.

Brody [00:28:34] Yeah, I'm really curious what I'm not going to call it a transition, but like the pathway, the journey from being a college student trapped, as you said, to closer to where you are today in your more free state. How was that journey like?

Andrew [00:28:55] I feel an impulse to just rapid-fire name a bunch of things, but I'm wondering if there's a better way? Like, if there's a common theme to some of those things,



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Brody [00:29:04] I'll specify it a bit. I'm going to read a little quote that you wrote once. It's "I no longer suffer from existential angst, low self-esteem, low grade anxiety, the need to control or change others or situation, suppress sexuality and gender expressions".

Andrew [00:29:23] Mhhmm.

Brody [00:29:24] This when I read that, I was like. I know many people who deal with that. How did you get the motivation to fix that?

Andrew [00:29:34] Yeah, what's coming up for me is. Putting like proactively moving myself into a new setting, and I think that's actually a good common theme because there is there's a clear physical - like I move myself to Asia for a year when I was twenty-three.

[00:29:57] And that was transformational for me because I, I was out of the typical setting of social life and dating life and partying and constantly referencing like where I was and the social order and looking at people's success around me. I quit social media. I was living in a house where the family didn't drink and had all sorts of different customs. I was meeting new people and getting to decide who I wanted to be like I don't have to think or act a certain way. So, it's kind of a theme of freedom. So, I'm going I'm going to replace it with the name of freedom, but that's for me.

[00:30:35] So there's freedom in the physical sense. And then I was able to explore some of the things that you reference in the quote. And then I think in the in the psychological space too - which has a lot of overlap - but three things: like meditation and yoga and breath work and other ideas like consciousness expanding modalities that are becoming more common as people start to think more about their inner world, because we live in a very external, egocentric material society. And in contrast, in the east, there's a bit more of an internal orientation also in indigenous cultures. And so just dipping my toes into a lot of those different ideas, communities, practices, created this inner freedom because I could start to know myself better. I could experience different states of consciousness and realize that one feels better than the other. And that helps build empathy, helps me regulate my nervous system on a more regular basis, like noticing when I'm caught in the pattern. It helped me be more open to feedback and learning from experiences. And all these things are a lifelong journey. It doesn't end. I mean, there's infinitely many lives.

[00:32:01] And there's this one picture that comes to mind is like. You're walking down the street and you're crossing paths with a stranger, and just imagine if you had some augmented reality glasses where you could see the totality of that person's life. The gifts they have, the wisdom they have, the things they have, the things they need, and they could see yours. And it was just like, oh, wow, you need a hug and I need ten dollars - maybe not that physical a transaction, but whatever. They're just like so much value that can be exchanged, if we are curious enough to learn about someone else, I think we can know ourselves better through getting to know the other. And we can have richer life experiences through these risks that we take and that just makes life more wonderful. And then if you're living more of a wonderful life that disseminates outwards and helps other



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people and then you're more clear about what's yours to do, and so you're not doing things that might be destructive to certain communities because you're pursuing a certain way of life and you might not be harmfully impacting someone close to you because you are more open to honest, transparent communication and to doing whatever you can to serve and love them, because that's like that's the ultimate game and not the like. Let me see how I can provide security and stability for myself so that I can live forever and have a lot of nice things. Not to polarize against that, but I think that's of that's been like the general arc of the West and of America and especially of the communities I grew up in. And I think a lot of people are waking up to that being like, oh, that's actually not so cool. I think that there's different ways of being and we can integrate all of them and figure out for ourselves what's best for ourselves.

Brody [00:33:56] I am curious how would you tell someone who dealt with the same things that you did? What would you tell them? The first step is to overcoming it?

Andrew [00:34:07] Is there a specific thing that you have in mind?

Brody [00:34:10] Lets go with low self-esteem, because that's, I think, the most common. How can you fix low self-esteem?

Andrew [00:34:15] I am not an expert in mental health, but what's coming to mind is, something around where we focus our attention. And so, if we're focusing on the aspects of ourselves that we feel shame around, or we feel inferior, relevant to others or not good enough, I think that counterbalancing that with, focusing on the things that we love about ourselves and are proud of and feel really good about is a really healthy practice. And just writing those things down for the first time can be powerful and then making a daily practice out of telling yourself that. Like I am beautiful, I am a leader, I am doing great things for the world. Just telling yourself that every day is a great reminder, really, like really letting it sink in.

Brody [00:35:09] Absolutely. Like even outside, if you don't believe in. I'm just going to say woo woo things, even just the building that just builds self-confidence by itself.

Andrew [00:35:20] Yeah, exactly. There's lots of soundtracks that are - those like affirmations - that aren't too woo. And what's cool is that you can begin to rewrite the story. Because basically what's happening. Is that one hundred times a day, sometimes prompted by external things like you see someone who you perceive as smarter than you, and so then you tell yourself that I'm not smart. Or it could just be you bump up against the homework problem that you can't solve. So, you start to become aware of when that soundtrack is playing inside of you. And then you're like, wait a minute, that's not true. I'm very smart. And I have like a different life experience than that person I'm comparing myself to. I'm doing great. I love myself. And you could just take those moments and transmute them. And then, you know, I don't think some of these things go away just like that. It can be a lifelong journey, like me with anxiety. I think that's something that I didn't even realize I had until like a year ago. That makes a lot of sense now. But now that I'm aware of it, once in a while I catch myself and then I breathe and I'm like, oh, I've been



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lying to myself. These stories aren't true. But they've just been told to us so many times by ourselves and by reinforced by culture and community and family and stuff that they feel true. And then they really control us.

[00:36:42] And this is like, a lot of the idea of meditation is to be able to be with these thoughts and see them for what they are, which are thoughts. And we can change our thoughts and then that can change our behavior, which can change our lives.

Brody [00:37:00] Yeah, the thing I do is whenever I notice a negative thought, I just repeat, cancel, cancel, cancel, cancel in my head or something like that. So, it's pretty similar, I guess.

Andrew [00:37:11] Yeah. So, one thing on that and again, I'm not an expert, but I think it might be Internal Family Systems or there's a few different models of therapy where - so those voices, they are parts of you that have helped you to survive. Maybe when you were younger, it was important for that part of you to say that thing, in order to protect yourself from perceived threats. And so, the cancel cancel, I think is a good strategy to kind of keep it at bay and not to control you. But I think underneath that and this is like a fractal expression of, I think, how we might solve a lot our problems of our time, which is not to make someone wrong for the ways that they're harming. But to see them, hear them, accept them, love them. And create connection with them. So that because they just want to be seen and heard. They're trying to get your attention. And you even if they're no longer saying they're no longer saying something that is right, they still feel like they're part of you. And so, there's this idea of loving those parts and honoring them, but not necessarily letting them be the admiral in your ear, telling you what to do. At the end of the day, like we make choices. And the way in which we make choices is often a lot of us aren't even sure how or we're making choices. So, bring awareness to the how or why I think is really important.

[00:38:50] And I'm not sure if this is a direct response to any of your questions, but I go back in time. I started seeing a therapist as soon as I could. I realize that there's a lot of - that therapy can be expensive, that it can be stigmatized, that it's still a fairly emerging field, and so there's some forms of therapy that actually might not be helpful in the long run. But I think having someone that you can go to and be open and honest, so like more than a family member, more than a friend, more than a partner. I think it's so valuable to have an outlet where you can speak your truth and then be supported and in that.

Brody [00:39:35] I agree, especially with the stigma thing. I mean, it's getting better, but still sad. What is one of the most damaging things that people actually normalize in today's society?

Andrew [00:39:48] I want to be sensitive to, a lot of the things that, the damaging things that people do, that if they had education around that thing or if they had accessibility to alternatives, then they wouldn't do it. So, there's like a big class consciousness piece within it.



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[00:40:05] But generally, yeah, I think that things like: what we put in our body, so alcohol and sugar, processed sugar, and with all these things, it's like there's a difference between use and abuse. And there's a quote I love; The difference between medicine and poison is the dose.

[00:40:29] So there's a lot of things in life that we can have healthy relationships with, but then when we abuse those relationships, it causes harm. So, there's definitely things we put in our body and then it's pretty easy to extrapolate back to the things we put into our minds. So, relationship with smartphones, social media, news media. My company Siempo, that I'm still stewarding, although the project is complete. We made a smartphone interface that supports mental health and wellbeing. So, it helps you be more intentional and less distracted with your with your phone usage. And yeah, we allow a lot of junk into our into our psyche that a lot of it kind of reinforces those things that like we're not pretty, we're not smart, we're not successful. It also feeds us misinformation. It tries to shove advertising down our souls. And there's like some quote I heard that by the time someone is in middle school, they can recognize the names of more than a thousand corporate logos, but fewer than 10 native species of plants.

[00:41:38] And I think that's really telling about the society that we've created and perpetuated around the world. Because, yeah, we put our attention on wrestling control over the material world and pursuing growth without limits and externalizing harms to the commons and to communities. And so that's yeah, that's pretty damaging. But like a lot of people don't have other options. And so, it's a really complex problem. And anyone who claims to have an answer like how to quote unquote fix capitalism or save the world, I think they're they have a great intention and also there's just a lot more sensemaking that needs to be done to really understand how all of these things are interconnected and how system change works in terms of where you intervene in that system and the second and third degree order impacts on the system.

[00:42:37] And so, yeah, there's a we all need each other. And I think one of the more damaging things is the spirit of individualism. If there's just me and I'm looking out for myself and I have all the answers. And my role is to accumulate the most for myself and those who I perceive as not other, like my people. It's that story of separation. And this goes this goes really deep. I think one of the things that's happening in society is that we are we're experiencing an evolution of events and. I think there's woo woo ways to look at it, and there's very rational, objective ways to look at it, which is we are no longer able to survive on this planet by consuming resources at the rate that we are, and so our species needs to evolve or self-terminate.

[00:43:43] And so what does that evolution look like? Well, it seems like that evolution is transcending the ego in order to include - not just other humans - but all life into our sphere of stewardship and responsibility. Kind of going from this win loss paradigm to an all win paradigm and really organizing around, finding ways that we can be serving all life and not just serving ourselves. So, I think that win-loss mindset is actually probably the most damaging thing, which is which is it's not bad. It's just it helps - it served for a very long period of time, maybe like hundreds of thousands and millions of years because we



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had to look out for ourselves and our tribe in order to survive. And now it's no longer serving. We can draw wisdom from that, and we can integrate it with the context of our time and teachings from other cultures that have learned how to live in harmony with nature. And so yeah.

Brody [00:44:49] Yeah, yeah. And I think this is probably the best possible time to start talking about One Nation. For those who don't know, can you describe what One Nation is?

Andrew [00:45:00] Absolutely. So, it's the perfect segue because at the core of One Nation, it's about shifting culture from a win-loss mindset to a win-win mindset. And specifically, political culture, which is rife with this bi-partisan polarized, left-right, us-them mentality that prevents any progress from happening. So, all this progress that we talk about, all this social change that we know is needed in order for us to create a more beautiful world, it's currently stuck. It's like the incentives of people in politics don't align with the incentives of people on the planet. So, something needs to be shaken up.

[00:45:44] And so One Nation is a lot of things. It's a new American political party. It's an idea and a story whose time has come. It's a context for people to organize and to bring a lot of these ideas from more of the regenerative culture margins of society into the mainstream. And it's, we see it as a pathway to bring greater levels of leadership into politics, which is this huge domain of choice making power that has really become corrupted. When my generation and I'm curious if it's true of your generation, entrepreneurship has kind of been like the cool, hip, sexy, prestigious thing to go into. And not polarize entrepreneurship. I think that business, private sector capitalism is an amazing force for change in the world. So is politics. So is media and storytelling, etc. And so, I think politics we've left the atrophy in the United States and many other places. And it's time for us to step into leadership, especially the millennials, the rising voting majority. And we have different ways of thinking about the world, the less rigid, more fluid, less self-obsessed, more all-win connected. And so, it's a multi decade effort to rebirth political culture in the United States and around the world, so that we can all come together and solve the problems of our time.

[00:47:23] In a way, my previous company, Siempo, the mental health tech, I had a very similar, there was like a very similar feeling tone to my vision of "Wow. like we have billions of these computers in our pockets that are orienting our attention towards things that are narcissistic, ego, self-serving, and we can change that. We can direct more towards what's life giving". And I still have I still hold that fantasy. And when I first went to a One Nation event about a year and a half ago, I was just so struck by the...about how the vision could also be brought into this domain of politics, which I had never really been interested in. I voted here and there, but I was mostly disengaged, kind of repulsed, no interest. And so, it's been great this year coming out of the embryonic phase, basically putting out bigger and bigger bad signals to say, "Hey, we're here, we're doing this, we're experimenting if you resonate with this message. then come on over, let's chat, let's hang out, we want to know what you care about. We want to listen to your perspective. We want to integrate all perspectives". So that's kind of what One Nation party is about.



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Brody [00:48:43] What would you say = and if I'm not to put you on the spot, if you don't know, it's fine - are the three biggest issues that One Nation wants to solve. Primarily, obviously, there's more.

Andrew [00:48:58] Yeah, so one of the common questions people ask is, what's your platform like where you stand on this and that? And we as individuals may have certain orientations and could give a response, but what's important and distinct about this new political party that's different from maybe the Green Party or Libertarian Party, which are more single-issue parties, is that we stand for a different type of process. So, so many of these issues that seem like there's no wiggle room, might actually have solutions, if we're able to come together, establish common ground, ask better questions, run experiments, look at things, perspective. We're standing for a different type of process of finding better solutions. And that's really important because as I was saying earlier, that all perspectives are true impartial, and the capital T truth lies in the space in between. And it's risky to go there. It requires a different set of leadership qualities, the ability to see and hear the other person to facilitate sensemaking, to , open to ideas that you might have strong opinions about open to being wrong, open to feedback, but it's that type of process that we think is fundamental to our survival as a species and is really part of our evolution as a species.

Brody [00:50:29] What's the dream? What else? That you can see happening in the next 20 years would. Be like the fulfillment of the goal.

Andrew [00:50:42] It's an amazing question. It's really a renaissance of civic engagement where the best and the brightest people are going into government because they care about their community, their state, their country, and they're willing to do what it takes to improve themselves so that they can be better stewards of this place.

[00:51:08] And that's just an add to that, by and large, doesn't exist in politics. It doesn't even really exist in the business world, although I think in some corners of the business world, such as the wellness space, mindfulness, you do have more people who are understanding the importance of self-worth, understanding the importance of the mind, body, connection of physical health and mental health of decolonization, anti-oppression work. And I think, like us having this conversation is really profound because maybe that awareness hasn't really been in your field, like maybe it's a time of peak fuck politics. That's not something I want to be a part of. And what we're saying is like instead of running from politics, we have to be like Neo in the Matrix and go into it, and from inside, because then we no longer are powerless. We then are empowered to make the changes we see in the world. And imagine multimillion millions of people who, whether elected or not, are rising up and being like, yeah, I'm not just going to sit at home and watch TV, I'm going to do something. And maybe I don't know what my role is, but I'm going to go out on a limb and open to discovering it. I'm going to I want to figure out what my purpose is because I have been depressed and lonely and addicted to things that. Yeah, fuck that. Like, I'm ready to do something different. So, I want to be in community with people. I'm part of something that is doing this really big thing, which is like the evolution of humanity so we can survive and thrive on this planet. And part of the human experience is that you



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are participating in the stewardship of the place you call home. And that could just be your neighborhood, but it could also be larger scales and scales. And there's like a shared interest in improving society. And this goes back to the whole you know, we've become so individualistic, we don't know our neighbors. We might not like our neighbors and we might not want them to be happy. And we hope that when we vote every few years that the other guy won't win. And then we could just go on not caring about what's happening in politics. Except being manipulated by the news media and having our nervous systems attacked by all the fear that drives advertisements, which keeps these media companies going. So, it's like it's all super connected. But end of the day, yeah, just more people participating in making this world awesome because. The world's awesome and we've kind of gone away from, like, loving the world, loving the planet, loving nature, loving others. And it's in a way, it's like a cancer, a disease of the mind. And we can we can flip that switch.

Brody [00:54:03] Yeah, it really sounds like to me and I really hope I'm not wrong here, but going back to the roots of democracy, you know, like when you think of the idea of democracy, is community members working for each other. Right? and that's really what it reminds me of, not American democracy, as we know today, but really the original idea.

Andrew [00:54:24] Yeah, I think that's right. And it's not that simplified. I think it's an integration of a lot of ways of knowing and ways of being, from different cultures around the world, from different time periods around the world, including new ideas that we haven't even really played with before. And I think that's a really unique thing to take that integral approach and include all the different perspectives, because they all serve some merit at some time. And each moment is different. And so, what is the best way to organize people? And technology affords us all these different ways of sensemaking and inviting people to participate in measuring, organizing, inspiring people. So, we're definitely at a fundamentally unique juncture, which, of course is going to require something categorically different. But it doesn't mean that we can't draw inspiration from things in the past.

[00:55:24] [theme music up, then down for].

Brody [00:55:24] That was Andrew Dunn. Thank you so much for listening to this episode of Titans as Teens. If you want to learn more about Titans as Teens, consider visiting [TitansAsTeens.com](https://titansasteens.com) for tons of information and further reading.

[00:55:36] [music up and ends cold]