



Wake Up Eager Workforce Podcast, Episode 66
#1 Wake Up Eager Mind Tip – Essentialism with Catherine Blakemore
-- Produced By Suzie Price

Transcript

www.pricelessprofessional.com/essentialism

Suzie Price: “No person would give up even an inch of their estate, and the slightest dispute with a neighbor can mean hell to pay. Yet, we easily let others encroach on our lives. Worse, we often pave the way for those who will take it over. No person hands out their money to passers by, but to how many do each of us hand out our lives? We're tight fisted with property and money. Yet think too little of wasting time, the one thing about which we should all be the toughest misers.” That quote from Seneca ties to our topic today. We're talking about essentialism. I'm talking about it with Brand Strategist and Designer Catherine Blakemore. It's an awesome conversation. We have a great time sharing this information with you. She is very wise on this topic of essentialism and is living it in a very strong way. You are going to benefit from this episode and I know you're going to enjoy it as much as I did in actually having this conversation, so I can't wait to share it with you. Let's explore this topic of essentialism now. Michael, hit it.

Intro: Welcome to the Wake Up Eager Workforce Podcast, a show designed for leaders, trainers and consultants who are responsible for employee selection and professional development. Each episode is packed full with insider tips, best practices, expert interviews and inspiration. Please welcome the host who is helping leaders, trainers and consultants everywhere, Suzie Price.

Suzie: Hi there. This is Suzie Price of Priceless Professional Development and you're listening to the Wake Up Eager Workforce Podcast where we cover everything related to helping you reduce drama, increase energy, and build commitment in a wake up eager workforce. So I am a Professional Facilitator and started my company, Priceless Professional Development, in 2004. We're experts in an assessment science called TriMetrix. And what we do is help you use that science throughout the life cycle of your employees. We also train and certify others to become experts in the science and we provide thought leadership through our books, our blog and this podcast. And so if you want to know all the show notes, or see all the episodes that we've had at the Wake Up Eager Workforce Podcast, go to wakeupeagerworkforce.com, wakeupeagerworkforce.com, there's our directory, there's links to find us on Spotify. And we also have an Android app and an Apple app. And those are both highlighted there. You can also click a button and there, and listen to episodes on the computer, so lots of ways to listen to the podcast. And you can also listen to us on your favorite podcast app by typing in wakeupeagerworkforce.com.

Suzie: So today is starting a little mini series where I'm sharing my top mind, body, spirit tips over the last year and going forward, and I'm having conversations with people about those tips. So last year I started doing Wake Up Eager Wednesday Tips, and I took everything that I shared last year, 2019, and put it in an eBook. And that eBook is *123 Mind, Body, Spirit Tips*. And it's complimentary. If you go to wakeupeager.com, you can find the book and then you can also find the tips for 2020. So this year instead of doing mind, body, spirit tips every Wednesday what I'm sharing are things about the lifecycle of an employee, so in tips, so there,

the goal is for it to be content rich, to give you tools and reminders and a very quick something to read, and again I will at the end of the year, put those in another eBook, but if you go to wakeupeager.com you'll not only get the complimentary eBook, you'll get to see all of the latest tips, the weekly tips there, shared about hiring stress management, team building. I share tools and resources. If you use TriMetrix, there's tips in there about that as well.

Suzie: I also would like to ask you if you have feedback about this episode or other episodes, please reach out and share if you get great results or something, something new you learned, let me know. It helps me know that you've listened and it will allow me to respond. Also would love to get your input via another vehicle, it's a way that you can push a button and record a message and then we could use your feedback, with your permission, on a future episode. So that is something new. If you go to speakpipe.com, speak, S-P-E-A-K, pipe, P-I-P-E,.com, forward slash wakeupeagerworkforce.com. You will see a little microphone, it's purple, you click it and record a message. I'd love to get some feedback about your tune in time. So what do you do for reflection and tune in time, and I will use it on an episode that's coming up. So go to speakpipe.com/wakeupeagerworkforce.com, Leave us feedback on this episode or others, and also you can leave me feedback around what do you do for tune in time, like your quiet time, your reflection time. We talk about that some in this episode and I'm actually devoting a full podcast episode coming up in two, I think it will be episode number 68, that I am going to be recording it around tune in time.

Suzie: All right. This is episode number 66 and we're sharing this in the series, that *#1 Wake Up Eager Mind Tip* and that is essentialism. And I'm having a conversation with Catherine Blakemore and we're going to talk a lot about a book called *Essentialism: The Disciplined Pursuit of Less* by Greg McKeown. And we're going to talk about what essentialism is. You're going to find out about the benefits. You're going to find out about the challenges. We're going to share tools and resources. We're going to talk about her career as a Brand Strategist and Designer, people who've influenced her. And it's a duo interview in that discussion, we're both are sharing, so I'm sharing insights, my answers to the questions, she sharing her answers to the questions. It was a fun podcast to record and discussion and it's, there's so many insights that it's, I think you're going to thoroughly enjoy it.

Suzie: I want to touch base a little bit on essentialism and tell you a little bit about my journey with it. I first heard about the topic of essentialism when Greg McKeown, the author of the book *Essentialism*, was interviewed by Tim Ferriss on the *Tim Ferriss Podcast*. It's one of my favorite podcasts, I listen to often, and I listened to the podcast twice and was super excited about it. So then I was on a plane trip to Arizona, it was January, 2018 and I was listening to the Audible book *Essentialism: The Disciplined Pursuit of Less*, and it's that kind of book where I took a million notes first off, and then once I landed, I told everybody that I talked to about it. "Have you read the book? Have you thought about this?" It really spoke to me. So not only did I listen to the book once or twice on Audible, I've listened to it several times. I referenced it in my tips, the Wake Up Eager Wednesday Tips at least 10 different times all throughout last year. The questions that were being asked, so when you go get the eBook, you'll see them referenced at least 10 different times in different ways, different insights and things that I was thinking about. I have it in my calendar that I look at every day, which is a notebook. I created a paper file with notes about essentialism. I've got a computer file with notes about it and the way I figured out that Catherine was also a fan of the *Essentialism* book was that we were doing a sharing at the recent Hartman conference at the, in the Fall of 2019, and I had just met her, she is now on the

board, we're both on the Robert S. Hartman board together, and I've really enjoyed working with her on the board, and I've also hired her to help me with some branding and messaging. But what I remember at the conference was when the sharing at the end, I shared that how the book of *Essentialism* had really highlighted that the one thing that I want to focus on and that, you know, is my big thing, thing I want to go big on, is TriMetrix, and is this science and helping others learn the science and use the science, which is why I ended up on the Hartman board because it ties into my intent. And as soon as I mentioned the book, *Essentialism*, you know, she turned around and looked at, and you know, raised her hand like, "Oh yeah, I love that book too." So we had had our conversation about it. So as we get into this discussion, I realized how smart I am that I picked her to be on this podcast because she is really an expert on essentialism. She could write the book and she's passionate and you're going to find it in here..

Suzie: I want to tell you a little bit about her background; she's the owner of Treadway Company. She's the Founder of Enhanced Freelance. She's fiercely pragmatic and solutions oriented; you'll see that as we talk. She likes to resolve business problems using design thinking. She thinks about brand experiences. She has humor. She's just a joy to work with. She's got her Undergrad in communication and a Master's Degree in strategic communication. The Owner and Creative Director of Treadway and then Founder of Enhanced Freelance, that actually is a digital resource shop for designers, creatives and consultants. So that's really cool. As a Brand Consultant, she works with all kinds of industries, non-profit, healthcare law, real estate, interior design. She's working with me as a Consultant. She's helped me so much in one conversation, we had one 90-minute conversation and I just got so much that was so helpful and I've made so many changes, big and small based on her feedback. So she's awesome. And we talk a little bit about something she shares in her Bio, which she says that she's a big believer in learning as much as you teach, giving back more than you've been given and seeking understanding before trying to be understood. And so she is doing all of that and more. And you're going to hear that in this episode. And as I mentioned, we are doing a dual sharing because I enjoy her company so much. And in the past on one of the podcast with Roger Price, he talked about, "Hey, I'm going to interview you some time and get your answers to these questions." So I decided, Roger and I have not been able to get together to do that, so I decided that Catherine and I would do it. So as we're answering all the questions about our who has influenced us and books that we love and that type of thing, we both share. So that was completely fun. So it's a little bit longer because of that. But I hopefully, I believe you'll find it worth it. So the show notes again are at pricelessprofessional.com/essentialism.

Suzie: All right, Catherine, thank you for being here. How are you today?

Catherine Blakemore: Thank you so much for having me Suzie, I am doing well, I am just absolutely enthused to be talking about all things essentialism.

Suzie: All right. So here's the hardest question. I had a hard time with it. What are your top three takeaways from the book *Essentialism*?

Catherine: Yeah, that's really hard to boil it down to just three because I've read this book so many times over so many years and adopted many of the different and incredible principles in different instances in my life, whether it's business or personal. But the first one that always comes to mind when I think about this book and when I share it with anybody, is when Greg

says, “If you don't prioritize your life, someone else will.” And that's really the crux of this essentialist dilemma, is you have to first have this understanding before embarking on becoming an essentialist. And so that understanding isn't just that you need to prioritize your life, but that your life is at risk of being prioritized by someone else if you don't focus in on your essentialist intent. So that's the first big one that comes to mind.

Suzie: Love it.

Catherine: And then, yeah, as a Brand Strategist and Designer, it's really interesting for me to put on that hat when I read this book, to take myself outside of who I am as an individual and put myself in the book as a Consultant, as a professional. So this next piece, my second takeaway, is really what speaks to me as a designer, and it's the way of the essentialist means living by design and not by default.

Suzie: Ohh...

Catherine: And it seems so simple, like it seems so, like, “Oh, of course I live by design. Of course I make choices in my life that are by design.” But when you're really tasked with ensuring intentionality in every single thing you do, you start to realize how little in your life is actually by design. So from what's sitting on your desk right now, what's sitting in your car, what you wear, what you don't wear, what social settings do you engage in, and so many more things outside of just your business and your work, but every single choice you make in your life is either by design or by default. And it's interesting that so many things are by default that we don't realize. And then you know, in that work setting, the other huge, I mean it's so hard to boil it down to three, but the other huge take away from this book...

Suzie: Yeah.

Catherine: Is really that when Greg mentions, he's tells a story in the book and he mentions a leader telling Greg of an experience in a company that talked to pri-one, pri-two, pri-three, pri-four, pri-five, so five priorities, all with abbreviation, pri- at the front, giving the impression that many things were the priority. But what that actually means is nothing is the priority. So in essence, and this is what I tell a lot of my clients, and what I think of in my own life every day with work, that you can truly only have one priority. So what is that priority going to be?

Suzie: Yeah, when you first hear his questions and you first take that in, you think, “Well, I want everything to be a priority.” You know, and my number one takeaway is, kind of ties to what you just said, which was if I could be truly excellent at only one thing, what would it be? So that question, you know, so that's the thing that has really stuck with me and from that, making that decision on what that is, it's really changed a lot of things. But it's hard, do you find with clients, that consultants or you know, all the different people you work with, people just push against the idea of making one thing the priority or what you're truly excellent at focusing on it.

Catherine: Yeah, absolutely. I mean for everything that I do with brand strategy, it's what Greg refers to as a trade off. Like you do have to make decisions and those trade offs affect not only the longevity of your business but your focus, your clientele, but you have to do it, and it's the not doing that is still a choice. And so absolutely, I think that goes into it tremendously on choosing what you're excellent that, cause everybody wants to be excellent at so many things.

But when you truly boil down what is excellence, it can be really challenging to define that for yourself and for your business.

Suzie: And he gives a little formula, and I have it written down here, I've got notes all over my desk from all my favorite things. You and I are two peas in a pod around that, but the formula is like, what am I most passionate about? I don't have the exact one, and I have it in my notes somewhere, I'll find it and put in the show notes, but like what am I most passionate about? Where are my talents? What does the world need? You know, and the world would benefit from, you know, and then to me, the one that always keeps coming back too, is if I could be truly excellent...

Catherine: Yeah.

Suzie: What would it be? Are there other kinds of questions that you guide people with when you're doing your brand strategy and design work? Or do those kind of hit it?

Catherine: Yeah, that's definitely a big part of it. And I think one of the biggest things I see in what I do is a just complete lack of clarity on the business or entrepreneurs, what Greg calls the essential intent. So what is the essential intent of, you know, if I could be excellent at one thing, what would it be? And ultimately that's where brand strategy comes into play. So developing a brand strategy really requires me bringing my essentialist view, but also the business on our CEO also adopting that essentialist view of there's so many infinite possibilities for a brand, but focusing in on just those vital few, is not something they intrinsically want to do. It's something they know they have to do, but it can be really difficult. So I think the questions, they vary extensively depending on the industry. And of course you know the personalities that I'm working with. But it's really just what is the essential intent of this business? And you'd be surprised how many businesses and companies I work with don't have one single sentence of their essential intent. In other words, we call it a positioning statement or all sorts of jargon with that. But that essential intent is lacking. And I mean I would challenge anyone to go review five websites of brands they like and see if they could find one sentence with the essential intent. And it's really, really difficult to boil down. And that's why people don't do it.

Suzie: Yeah. Yeah. It's almost like when you give a talk, a 15-minute talk is so much harder than a full day workshop, you know? Or so for this example the, you know, having a one statement that says what our essential intent is so much harder than having 10 core values or you know, cause you have to then really make some decisions. That's so interesting.

Catherine: Well I was just going to say within brand strategy, it also, that essential intention, that brand strategy, also means actually adhering to it. So not just writing it, articulating it and setting it aside, but if adhering to it, and all you do and all the business does from content production to choice of client to interior decorating, all sorts of things, but brand strategy, like that essential intent in the words, you know what Greg says in the book, it eliminates a universe of other options and strategically maps a course for the next 5, 10 or even 20 years of your life and your business' future.

Suzie: So talk about clarity, once you get comfortable on what you're essential intent is. That's what's so exciting about essentialism is the clarity.

Catherine: Yup.

Suzie: Yeah. And it's with brand and with marketing, but it's just also with like me as a consultant, that's important part, and that's something you're really helping me with is the branding piece and the design of how things look and feel. But also for me, like day-to-day and, and I know you and your business, same thing, you know, how do I spend my time? What do I say yes to? What do I say no to? And the clarity, you know, when I decided what I want to be truly excellent at, when I said that, a lot of things changed.

Catherine: Absolutely.

Suzie: It's taken me a little while to unwind and I'm still getting caught in my shorts at times saying yes to things, cause you know, people expect it. But it gets better and better.

Catherine: And I think, absolutely, that goes into the model of becoming an essentialist. You don't just suddenly wake up one day and you were a non-essentialist yesterday and you're an essentialist today, but every part of essentialism is at cognitive and conscious choice that is made every single day. So you might make the wrong choices, but that doesn't change your essentialist intent. And I think that's what's so beautiful about this model and this way of thinking and approaching your life is that it's not all or nothing, it's not do or die, it's very flexible in the sense that you are continually growing and this model adapts to the fact that as an individual you are growing as an essentialist, you're choosing to, you're engaging with something carefully and considerately, and that can be hard, and take time.

Suzie: Yeah. Yes. And you know, the places where I have said yes when I, a little voice was say, cause the voice, the essentialist, his voice wasn't strong enough yet, where I've said yes, it's been okay, like you say, because, and I do believe this just in general before I ever knew essentialism, but what I do understand is when I do something that is not the best fit, I'm so much clearer. It just makes my clarity, I just go back to, it's like, "Okay, you said this is what you really care about." And so I don't really beat myself up so much as to say, "Okay, back to it. You know, we're going to, nothing's just a straight line, you know, we're going to have some squiggly movement."

Catherine: Well exactly, and he even says, "It's a disciplined pursuit of less."

Suzie: Yes.

Catherine: It's an active pursuit, an engaged verb, it is not something you are and then just stagnantly existed, it's an actual discipline, day-to-day pursuit and...

Suzie: Pursuit.

Catherine: But it is so beautiful about it.

Suzie: Yeah. So yeah, so that, this other question that I've gotten from his book that's kind of in my top three is, is this the most important thing I should be doing with my time and resources right now? So that kind of ties into what we're talking about. So those, and I actually have that on my calendar. I have both questions, "If I could be truly excellent?" And then, "Is this the most important thing I should be doing, my time and resources right now?" That is my check, you

know, and I keep transferring it. I go to the front of my calendar, every time I get a new calendar I go back and look at, I've got sitting here right now and go, "Okay, yeah, that was one where you said yes and it wasn't the most important thing I should be doing, you know?"

Catherine: Yeah. And it is hard because you don't always have hindsight, 2020, right? Like when you're passionate and you're excited, like you know, both of us we are, we get excited about so many things, and when that excitement is so overwhelming that there is no other option, it can be really difficult to discern if this is one of the trivial many or one of the vital few. And sometimes you just have to do it in order to know if, you know, something like that, and that feeling that you had, that idea that you had is something that you should be spending your time and resources on. And sometimes it does take exploring it to know, "Okay, that's outside of my essentialist intent for myself and my business."

Suzie: Yeah.

Catherine: I mean it's really just a work in progress, but I mean it's the most worthy thing to work toward.

Suzie: Yeah. To know that's the goal. And he even, he was interviewed by Tim Ferris and that's how I found him.

Catherine: Oh I love that podcast.

Suzie: Yes. So I figured you had listened to it, I have listened to it like two or three times and I just listened to it again recently in preparation for our conversation.

Catherine: I listened to it this morning.

Suzie: And he even says...

Catherine: And that was a good use of our time.

Suzie: Yes it was. There we go. His assistant went on vacation for a few months or 30 days or whatever, and he got himself in trouble because people were asking to do stuff and he's pretty clear and I think he does an excellent job. But again, you know, he said, "Oh, she was like, what you committed to things you said you weren't going to commit to." So it kinda made me smile, but he was kind of telling on himself, it's like, okay, this is a journey

Catherine: And what I love about, but his story too, about how he, this is what he learned. I mean this is what he saw for 20 years that he was mulling over this question. And that's what is again, so beautiful about this model is, it's not just another, you know, business development or personal development book stemming from a year of insight, it's stemming from, you know, almost 20 years of mulling over this concept. And I just think Greg does an excellent job of boiling it down in a way that's really, really applicable to our everyday together with other people, our together time with ourselves and our work time and all that.

Suzie: Yeah. And that's what has made it so hard for us to pick our top three because there's so many takeaways. It's so, it's so rich. It's one of those books, I think, that will stand the test of time because there's just so much in it that is so helpful.

Catherine: Yeah, absolutely.

Suzie: One of the other top takeaways that I'll share so we have given a good list, which I like that we have some different things is, I, and I did this and I just went back and revisited it too, but is to do a Don't Do list.

Catherine: Mmm hmm.

Suzie: And that was really helpful. So you know, here's what's essential and I actually have a list personally and professionally, I'm sitting here looking at it right now and then here's what's non-essential. And so there are things where I actually made myself put, "No, I am not going to do this," which was really hard because some of these things are things I like, but it's, you know, the good for the great, right? Let it go of the good, letting go of the good, so then I can go do the great. And I just see one right now that I said I would not do, and somebody just reached out to me and asked me to do it. And I was kinda like, "Well they kind of want me to do it." So it's good we're having this conversation cause I'm going to say no to it. But then there were some, I said I will limit, you know, and then the personal, I did the personal non-essentials too.

Catherine: That's a good one. That's a hard one.

Suzie: Yeah, that's a hard one because people want to do stuff. But boy I love my essential list when I look at that; I feel a sense of, "Awww!"

Catherine: Yeah, that clarity, it adds ease and I think we live in a world where we are so inundated by information, by knowledge sources, by notifications, by busy-ness. And we have adopted this mentality that busy equals success or busy equals good. And that is so counter to this idea of the essentialist, where time and task and intent is chosen so specifically and so intentionally. And that's why I think it's such a direct counter, because it'd be easy to just react and say, "Yes, I want to do that thing that you emailed me about," that is kind of on my limit, maybe Don't Do list and is easy to react and say, "Well that's just another good thing." But essentialism, you know, it does, it's good to great, you have to sacrifice some of what is good to get to what is great.

Suzie: Yeah. Love that. How have these ideas since you've been, it sounds like you read this book a couple of years ago, correct?

Catherine: Yeah.

Suzie: How have they impacted you? Can you think of changes that you've made personally, professionally? Any examples?

Catherine: I mean, it's just countless. I mean, I did read this book for the first time a few years ago, probably three or four years ago, and I've read it every year since. So this is something that I have gone back to as a foundational understanding for my intent for my life. So I've probably adopted this book on what may seem like the extreme side of things, but I think it's because it's a worthy, worthy model to aspire to because it's talking about how you can give the best and fullest and most intentional contribution to the world around you. But you have to make sacrifices in order to do that. So, I mean, I guess how they've impacted me personally and

professionally is just a ruthless, relentless editing of self, of work, of focus and of community. So kind of going back to what you were saying, where you do your personal non-essential items and essential items, and that can be really hard because people, they don't always, you know, see and maybe even except how my essentialism will impact them because this really means, you know, we're talking about what Greg talks about in the book is, that the first act of the essentialist is to start scanning your environment for those vital few and eagerly eliminate the trivial many. So actually actively enjoying the elimination of the trivial many in your life. And a lot of people just aren't going to understand that, because you know, whether it's people, things, conversations, ideas, that you just no longer choose to engage in. And then of course more time spent toward your defined purpose, a purpose that might be drastically different than how you used to be as a non-essentialist, and that that can be really difficult, I feel for others to understand. So for me, the adoption of being an essentialist in everything from my personal life, to my work life, to my home, all of these things, they cause a disruption, if you will, in the natural flow. And it's supposed to. But I think getting over that, that first, I think that first year of really working towards this was really difficult. And I think within that too is I'm, I gravitate towards minimalism as a construct for visual space in my home, in purchases and I don't engage well with excess. And this is just something I've learned because of essentialism and they both bleed into each other separately and together. But yeah, it can be, I think, I guess, it's impacted everything is the short answer to that question, but it's been a challenge.

Suzie: So what's one or two specific things? You said, you've done ruthless editing, what would be a before and after on something? So before I did this, and now I do this.

Catherine: Yeah. So...

Suzie: What would be an example?

Catherine: So before, I was aggressively reactive to email, to work, I often talked about myself as a firefighter. Like I would just be putting out fires. And so that was before. And then as an essentialist, I am aggressively proactive, so no longer being a firefighter, but being one that plans fire escapes, for instance, if we're using that metaphor. So I think with this ruthless editing of my emotional responses to things, I was formerly quite reactive and now very, very proactive. So that, that was an essentialist shift for me. I think, I feel like for me, it was almost unconscious on the ways that I adopted this, but it's bled into so many things. So one of these things is I believe conversations, and then what we choose to talk about, and being essentialist in what we talk about, I think the virtues of, you know, not gossiping and talking about ideas instead of people and things. These are things we know as well rounded people, but there are things that if you analyze every conversation in your day-to-day life and if every conversation was essential or non-essential, you'd actually be surprised how much time we spend speaking and engaging with things that are more and not better, instead of less but better. That makes scanning those conversations for value. And again, for me, all of this goes back to what Greg calls, you know, your highest contribution to the world around you. And if I'm giving my highest contribution, it's not with a non-essentialist conversation, it's with an essentialist one.

Suzie: Hmm... So conversations have changed. It sounds like how you manage your day has changed, you used to just respond to emails, and what I'm envisioning is you, maybe you are blocking out your days or what is it there?

Catherine: I'm a big time blocker. Yeah. I, that brings up a great point Suzie, yeah, I'm so glad that you intuited that, because that was something that did come from essentialism, was a really strong adherence to time blocking. So my morning rituals, the focus of each day, what those are on, in the book he mentions, "Do not call Mondays," or "No call Mondays." That's one of the people that he interviewed, and while that's not my model of being a "Do not call Monday," really specifically dedicating time was a huge transformation from this book, cause you know how good time blocking is.

Suzie: Yes.

Catherine: But until you connect the essentialist's core intent of your life with the value of time blocking, you'll never actually adhere to your own time blocking. So absolutely, you're dead on with that.

Suzie: Yeah. Until you're kind of, you're bought into a case, "This the best use of my time and resources right now," and then you're bought into the idea of, "I want to, I want to live this life fully, I want to bring my highest level of contribution in my, by my doing, that I am most satisfied, I am most fulfilled, and that's how I make a difference in the world." And then in order to do that we have to make decisions, so it's interesting. What are a couple of your kind of time blocking things do you say, because it would probably be interesting to people. I know it, our TTI Success Insights; I know they've changed to where they only have meetings on Tuesdays and Thursdays. And I know Rick, Rick Bowers, has talked about what a difference that has made. They don't have meetings all spread out over the week, you know, so they have meetings there, I think it's their internal meetings, Tuesdays and Thursdays. And so that's been a small example of that. What are some, a couple of different things that you say that you've done? My sense is you're way better at this than I am in regard to structure, because that would not be my greatest strength and I think that is one of your great talents, so, oh, let me learn from you, my dear.

Catherine: So I just pulled up my calendar so I can tell you exactly how I time block.

Suzie: Okay, do tell, some examples, how you do it.

Catherine: Exactly. So time blocking, I do it both digitally and physically, I am a big physical day planner kind of person. I believe that is, it fundamentally matches with my essentialist intent, not just jumping into a screen. So I have a custom day planner that has my weeks, my To Do's, my priority, my gratitudes, meals, habits, all those kinds of things. And so for me, I time block in two different areas so I'm never not seeing what I'm supposed to be doing, because again, I really love that structure. I love those boundaries. But so for me, Mondays are always, I time blocked from 9:00am to Noon. So this is sort of my, you know, this is my confirmed, this is what I'm doing. So 9:00am to Noon on Mondays is what I call CEO time. That's all the real big picture stuff. I actually even have in the calendar what the tasks must include, whether it's personal notes, doing financial management, system organizing, vision settings, strategic partnership development. All of that stuff is within CEO time. On Wednesday afternoons from 12:00 to

4:00pm, I've got content development. So this is blog writing, this would be putting together case studies from past clients, any sort of content development. And that was a lot more relevant when I had my company on social media, but I don't anymore because that was not essential for me. So then on Friday from 9:00am to Noon, I also have product development. So any products that I'm working on, that's really focus time, sometimes that bleeds into content development depending on, you know, what it is. But those are my three non-negotiables every single week. On Wednesday mornings, I like to treat myself to a slow morning. So whether it's walking or enjoying my tea or reading, I try and have the slowest possible morning bleeding into 11:00 AM around on Wednesday, so that those are my non-negotiables every week.

Suzie: Well, love it, great examples. Yeah, that's awesome.

Catherine: Yeah, I love it, I mean, I like the guidelines, I'm a rule kind of girl.

Suzie: Yeah, yeah. That's great. And I'm not so good at the rules. Now, a couple of things that I do, one is I always have tune in time. So every day, well without exception, and I might do it, I allow myself to do it as often as I want during the day, but I never start the day without having done it, and to me that's writing, it's meditation, it's quiet time. And then the other thing I do is, I have ,so I'm not as good, but I'm better, but the other thing I do is I workout, I do something physical, so it'll be, it used to be a little bit more hectic about that, and now I've kind of relaxed that a little bit, but I'm always doing something physical every single day because I am in my head a lot and I am a thinker and I love knowledge and I could get all lost in it, you know, like the absent minded professor. So I have to make sure that I pay attention physically. So those are my two, every single day, non-negotiables, everything else, you know, I kind of have a loose system, but I like what you shared though cause, so some of that, I'm going to copy some of what you have there, blocking out some time. Awesome.

Catherine: And what's great about the blocking out the time is it again, I think it just goes right back, everything I feel like in my life goes back to essentialism, but like it goes right back to this idea of taking a moment. So when I, you know, when, you know, Noon hits on Wednesdays for content development, if I pause, you wouldn't you know with tune in time or whatever it is, and I can discern what really matters in that moment for content development, which unless you're, if you're moving through your week without any sort of boundary or time set aside, then how will you discern, how will you know what is the most critical content for you to develop? And I think that that's truly where essentialism that comes into play, is it setting aside that time to think to consciously choose and if you don't have that time it would be impossible to be an essentialist, you have to set aside the time.

Suzie: Yeah. That's interesting. My tune in time article, which I'm actually doing a podcast, so you know, each one of these are my favorite tips, you know, for mind, body and spirit. So my spirit tip is tune in time and I've got a whole list of people and what they do for tune in time. And it ties into this because it's setting aside time to think, feel, align, you know, and you know, Bill Gates takes a week every year or every quarter or you know, different people do different things, so I love what you said about set aside time. When you think about, before you read this book and really took, I picked the right person to talk about this with me, I knew I did, I knew it...

Catherine: Because I live and breath it.

Suzie: I know, I mean, how cool is it, I didn't know to this extent, but I knew that we clicked and I knew that you were excited about this book, but I just am so happy.

Catherine: It is everything for me.

Suzie: Isn't that great? So when you think about before and you think about today, what would you say your satisfaction scale is or your I like, you know, since we talk about wake up eager, my level of days where I'm waking up eager then, compared to now, now that you've applied this into your life. You could do a scale of 0 to a 100 in regard to how you feel about your days. What would you say before, how you might've felt? And maybe now? I don't know if that's too subjective. It doesn't have to be perfect, but just dialogue in those terms.

Catherine: Yeah, no, it's a good question Suzie, because I think it's a complicated one. I've actually thought about it a lot because before, as a non-essentialist, I prided myself on my busyness, which is easy to do because it means you're in demand, it has all of these value statements associated with it, but what it really does is it shackles you to productivity. And as someone who likes to do things, breaking off those shackles and moving into this essentialist view, which is inherently freedom based and autonomy based, I thought I was happy as a non-essentialist, I thought I was productive, I thought I was fulfilled because I was doing, but then so as far as 0 to 100, I think at the time, I thought I was like an 80. But in reality, I think I was at a 30.

Suzie: Oh my goodness. That is great.

Catherine: Yeah. Yeah. And as an essentialist, I know now, to my core, I am operating at at least a 90 to 95 every single day. And that is because I have that sense of ultimate autonomy, total freedom, utter clarity, all of these things that we think we have when we are busy and productive because we know what we're doing. But the essentialist view demands that you know who you are, not just what you're doing. And so that would be sort of my response to the gradation, I thought I was good before. And that's a non-essentialist thing is, you know, "It's all important, I'm reacting to what's most pressing," I say "Yes, I'm busy," all of those things. And you don't always recognize that that is not feeding your purpose as much as actually being an essentialist. So I think that answered the question.

Suzie: Yup. I think that's what this book...

Catherine: What about you?

Suzie? So I would say, you know, I'd say I'm very deliberate. I've been deliberate for a long time in regard to a lot of things. So that is, that has helped me; I can get control of my day more. But you know, I would say every day, I'm with you in regard to the 90 to 95, I feel on track in regard to my life overall, my work, I need to still need to dwindle down some things, but you know, spending time with the people I want to spend time with, prioritizing family. And I have these little statements that I read almost every day that's about, you know, how important my husband is and how important we are as a couple and how important family is. And then you know, that we, and that we both are very focused on supporting each other's missions. So we don't need to be together around our mission, but we need to be fully supportive of whatever interests the other. So all of that feels very deliberate. I don't have much, I can't think of anything in my life

personally, couple of things that probably need to be cleaned up in regard to past stuff with people, but very limited there. My goal is to kind of close all that out, so that all feels kind of essential and complete. And now getting my work back caught up with that because I do like so much of what I do. I don't pride myself on busy-ness and I do put happiness first, some rambling as I'm answering this, but I do put my, you know, how do I feel? Do I feel on track? I make a lot of my decisions based on that, you know, does this feel on track? I think after having read the book, I was already kind of there, maybe a little bit, but then I read the book, I'm like, "Oh my gosh, there's so much more I need to be doing," you know? And so I've deleted work, you know, that I have, since I've read the book last January, deleted work that I don't do anymore. There's more coming. You're helping me with my website in regard to taking away things. I've added people that I can, my business, that I can say, "Here you do this part. I still like that part and can talk about that part but I'm not going to do it anymore." I joined, I said "Yes," to the Hartman Institute board. That was new. They had asked me before, but until I decided that my one thing is this whole Science of Axiology and the TriMetrix and that is what I get most excited about, that's my highest level of contribution, it makes my heart sing to do it and talk about it. So I've joined the board and I'm enjoying every minute of that, so that feels really good. So that ties to my essentialism, I've said a lot more, "No's," to social invites, but I could do better there cause I am pretty social and I love people and I love all these people I have a past with, but I've got to kind of button that down, if I'm going to do some of the other things I need to do. So that would be my biggest challenge in regards to that, so better.

Catherine: You just hit on something interesting with the social side of this, cause I think this is something Greg doesn't go into as much, but this principle applies so well to the people you surround yourself with. I mean, you know, every personal development seems like us, we know this concept of, you know, you are the top 5 people you spend the most time with. But if you really think about that, it's, Greg mentions this in the book, he says that, "Essentialists have to accept that they cannot be popular with everyone all the time." And that's something that is, really as people who like people, like us, it's hard because, you know, "It's not that I don't like you, it's not that I don't value you, it's just that I am choosing me and sometimes that means I'm not around with you." And that can be a really, socially, I would be interested to see, you know, Greg says about that because it's an interesting dynamic to essentialize your social life, if that's a thing.

Suzie: Yeah. Have you been able to do it? Have you been doing it?

Catherine: Yes, probably not as gracefully as I should have. I took this book very seriously the first time I read it, probably painfully so to my friends and family around me. But I truly believe the value, it's there. I just think you know, he talks about graceful ways to say no and to articulate yourself there. But I mean really it comes down to the fact that sometimes you just have to say, "No." And by not saying anything, that's still a choice too. So there's a lot within that concept of, you know, social and what feeds you, I think too, cause, you know, the fact that, you know, you love people and, you know, I can tell and just hear how much you love your family, and that's the same for me, and so it's just interesting to see. It's like, "Okay, well if I have, if I'm saying, "Yes," to my family, that means that I'm probably going to have to say, "No," to some people who want time from me that I can't give them while I'm being my highest and best self." And that can be challenging, especially as I feel like I'm a really a generous spirit. That's really

hard for me because that means I have to say, “No,” or reschedule or postpone or schedule out months in advance just to have, you know, dinner with a friend. But that's the painful, yet valuable part of being an essentialist in your social life too.

Suzie: Yeah, it's necessary. You know, is this my highest level of contribution? And, and I think the only way that I can say “No,” at times, when I'm, when I'm doing able to say, “No,” gracefully or sometimes like you said, not so gracefully, is when I have a stronger “Yes.” So you know, the having the clarity, what we started out with, you know, so knowing what your essential intent is, like around my work and around my personal life and knowing what that is. If I have a strong enough yes, I'll find a way to say the no. When the yes gets a little muddy, you know, here's a stupid place that's a challenge for me is clothes, I like clothes, I have a lot of clothes. I love outfits. I have a closet in my home in Marietta, that's very large, I have another closet in my home in the mountains, it's very large. And I've got shoes, you know, I mean, and it's like, holy moly, we need to essentially, and you know, everything in there I like and I do get rid of stuff and I do go to the consignment store, but I haven't put the brakes on that yet. So that's one, you know, whereas like I don't have a strong enough, whatever the yes needs to be on that to say no to all the clothing stores, you know. And some of that is, as a kid, I didn't have many clothes, so I'm compensating, because it feels good that I can, you know, what do you think?

Catherine: Well, I just think I also grapple with this because I love fashion, I love clothes, I love, I love vats, I love the textures on them, I love the colors, I love the, I love the shapes, I love everything about them, I always remember 4 years old flipping through Vogue.

Suzie: Yeah, yeah, yeah. It's like, “Oh that's cute.”

Catherine: Exactly. It is very difficult to balance that. But I think this goes back amazingly Suzie to, hat Greg talks about in the book, and I just pulled up the quote he, he talks about basically, you know, if you're not prioritizing your life, someone else will, you know that whole concept, and this is when he talks about the closet, do you remember this from the book?

Suzie: Yes. He talked about in the opening. Yes. Yes.

Catherine: He says, “Imagine if every time you open the doors to your closet, you found that people had been shoving their clothes in there. If every day you cleaned it out in the morning and then by the afternoon found it already stuffed to the brim.” And that is so funny because it totally, for me, the first time I read that, I was like, “That's my closet.” That was before I had a centralized it. And then you know, it becomes, when you think of the closet as your life and then you think about your closet and there's always ways to cut, to edit, to live by design, not by default. And so I think, you know, I love that Greg does have this as a verb and a process because it's not something we're ever going to, like, I'm probably going to get the shoes if I like the shoes and that may, that might not fit with my essentialist intent, but dang, if it puts me at a 92 instead of a 91 waking up eager, I'm good. I think everything is a trade off, like he mentions.

Suzie: Yes. Yup. Yeah. I definitely need to simple. And you know, I have this great clothing consultant who reaches out to me and says, “Oh Suzie, you need this.” And I like her, she's lots of fun and we laugh. And then the next thing you know, because I go see her, or I get on a call with her without my intent really clear. And I get all caught up in, “Ooh, that's cute. Oh yeah,

that's cute." So she ships all that stuff to me, you know? And so really, there's great example and he uses it in the book as a way to say, you know, symbolize our minds. You know, for me it's actually my closet. So anyway, yeah.

Catherine: That's how I read it too, the first time.

Suzie: It's like, "Oh, that's very literal in my life, but it really is about, you know, if we don't prioritize, people will come in." It's kind of like my wonderful clothing consultant, you know, she's coming in and she's literally stuffing new clothes into my closet and I'm letting her, but in his verbiage too, it's about, you know, we'd let people do that with our lives. So it's so interesting to me, that makes a lot of sense to me, and I have to get on it.

Catherine: Well, no, that's a perfect example because that is the perfect example of you, as in that moment, she is not your priority, but you are hers. And so she is consciously aware, be aware of when others make you a priority and how that affects your own priorities is a really interesting dynamic, because once you move into this essentialist mindset, you can start to pinpoint, "Okay, this person is making me their priority or I am key to their priority." And there is part of, I think that he doesn't talk about this in the book to my memory, but there's part of that, that awareness requires a level of grace and compassion to those people. Because if you know that you can be at kingpin for someone else's achievement of their priority and that's not in your, you know, essential intent, how do you navigate saying yes or no, but you, you know, there's a lot within that I think should be unpacked. But I also think it should just be thought through on an individual level because it's really easy to pinpoint when you're the kingpin for someone else's priority, you have to figure that out on your own.

Suzie: I love the languaging, because that does happen like so when people personally want you to do things or even in the work, they want you to do this and it's like, "Well I don't really want to do that." So you're the kingpin to their priority. And that is a tricky thing. And he talks about that in that interview with Tim Ferriss and I'm sure he does it in the book too, but it's about, this is a problem, essentialism is a problem usually for successful people. So they already are having success and now they've got so many options. And so then it becomes even more important, and so I'm not saying I'm so successful or that we're so successful, but we do have lots of options, you know, and I think everybody listening to this call does, you know, so all of our listeners have lots of options. So this is where this comes into place, when you have lots of options. So I can buy a lot of clothes and I can, and it's really good, in some ways it's really fed of desire for me, but now it's time to clean it up. You know? And I'm saying it now to the world. You know?

Catherine: And then think about Suzie too, getting dressed, right? The choices that you have, the decisions you have to make all ready, is that an essential decision? Is choosing what you're wearing every day an essential decision that should take time and energy and brain power? So those things are interesting too. I mean, I like choosing my clothes, so I'm not the best example of not, I'm not Steve Jobs, I'm not just wearing black.

Suzie: Yeah. Me neither, I'm not doing that.

Catherine: Yeah. But at that same time, there was a reason why, it saved him time and decision-making energy. And Greg talks about this in the book; he says that the preponderance of choice has overwhelmed our ability to manage it. And that is insane when you think about it because we struggle daily to manage our ability to choose. I mean the amount of choices we make from picking up our phone when a notification goes off, to opening or shutting a door, to what's on your desk, to all of these decisions. And there's so much choice that our decision making, he mentions this too, the quality of our decisions deteriorate the more choices we have to make. So what decisions can you eliminate from your life every day? And I think that that's another difficult for me kind of things. But you know, it's a trade off, like he, you know, he mentions the trade offs in the book, but as an essentialist, you do, you sacrifice what is familiar, perhaps, what is even easy, for this exhilarating unknown of having uncompromised focus. And I think that's challenging, but it's a worthy pursuit.

Suzie: Awesome. So would you say, we talked, we're talking a little bit about challenges, which was the next thing we were going to talk about. What else would you say is challenges? So I talked a little bit about the other person's priority of the my clothing, which is a serious one. And then you know, the, and you mentioned a little bit of the personal piece, but it sounds like you have managed that because you've been doing it for a while, anything else that has been particularly challenging when implementing this into your life? Or does that cover it?

Catherine: You know, that covers it for the most part. But I think one thing, you know, like I said, it's been a couple of me adopting and working with this essentialist attitude or these essentialists focuses on my life. But one of the things that now as I've been living in this freedom that comes from essentialism, I'm recognizing that my enthusiasm and my excitement towards ideas and things can sometimes, I mentioned this earlier, can sometimes overwhelm my ability to stay essentialist. So for me, my best, essentialism moments are when I'm very, you know, I've had my tune in time, I'm really clear with myself, I'm very present with myself, but when I get excited and rolling with some ideas or with other people, I can lose track of my own intent because of my enthusiasm. So right now my biggest struggle is how do I maintain my enthusiasm, yet not sacrifice or do an unconscious tradeoff of my essentialist intent and it's challenging. I don't know that I have a solution for it. That's something that's just come to mind, you know, in the past couple months or so. So it's a little different, a little new.

Suzie: Yeah, that makes sense. So let me see if I understand it, so you are working on something, you have your intent of where you're gonna, you know, you know what your business intent is and how you want to spend your time, but then you get involved in something and you get so excited or enthused around it, you veer off a little bit or you commit to things that you wouldn't have? Is that what's happening?

Catherine: Absolutely. Absolutely. I just forget how it fits in. I don't consciously recognize how it fits in cause I'm just so excited about it. So that for me is my own work in practice, my active choosing, my choices within the day.

Suzie: So at times do you say, "Well that's okay," or has it been every time that you've done that you've thought, "That's not okay, I should, I need to course correct," has it sometimes led to good things or?

Catherine: Absolutely. I mean, I think, and that's what I mentioned I think early on when we started our chat today because it's sometimes, where it's like you just have to go for it in order to determine if it was essentialist or not. So it's like a hindsight 2020 thing is, was this essential for me? Well, sometimes you can't really know until you've actually done the thing. And so yes, I think always I view everything that I've ever done as a learning experience and telling me more about who I am. I think there's always things to learn, there's always things to know. And so I don't regret them, but it helps me clarify, I guess clarify and clarify, you know, if I get that feeling in the future that was associated with this thing that was not so essentialist, and I recognize this feeling, it helps me understand a pattern of behavior that in the future I can say, "Okay, that's how you felt when so, and when led to non-essentialism." So it helps me to pinpoint my nose, really pinpoint how to say, "No."

Suzie: Yes. Yeah. Or catch it, catch it before it takes you down a track. Really it doesn't, it isn't your highest-level contribution to do that, to go that way. And I think it's interesting what you're saying too about enthusiasm. So you're style, you want to, I think about the assessments, it's, you know, our greatest strength becomes our blind spot. And so it is the same for essentialism. I'm a yes person. I mean, I'm like, "Oh sure, yes." A pure like, "Oh sure I could do that." You know, that would be my unfiltered Suzie, you know? But my essentialist Suzie needs to say, "Well yes, if it matches my objective." So, I mean, I would think that all of us have, you know, our own blind spots. They, some just natural strengths or your strengths are, I mean, I met you, first time I met you, you're super friendly, you're super enthusiastic, optimistic, and so I mean all of that is your greatest strength. So it's so interesting, you know, one of many of your greatest strengths. So all of us have that. So knowing, you know, if everybody thinks about what their strengths are by their motivators or their assessment, patience style, or even their strengths, under the hood, you know, how we think and make decisions with the Hartman science, you know, those things are things we lean into because they come naturally to us, but it's also the things that will have us tip toe out of our essential world because we're so good at it, it is so natural.

Catherine: I think, you know it's interesting because when thinking about your blind spots, this goes exactly back to what Greg says in the book where he talks about the overwhelming reality is that we live in a world where almost everything is worthless and very few things are exceptionally valuable, and that is, you kind of bristle at that statement a little bit cause is everything really worthless? But you think about it and it's, what is worthy to your essential intent and the reality is not a lot. It's really focused. Once you get clear with yourself and your intent, not a lot fits in to uncompromisingly chasing after that intent, and you know it's just really revealing about where, you know, you've been unconsciously holding up these trivial many as pillars or stress points in your life instead of just letting them go and focusing on those vital few. And that's again where I think our blind spots come in is, sometimes you don't know what you need to be letting go. And the only exercises is to just keep at it, to keep identifying, to keep working toward where you can give your highest contribution, your highest-self.

Suzie: Yeah. That's great. And you know, for me one of the things, like a tool that I use, cause that's kind of our next thing we're going to talk about, is it ties into what you just said and it is going to sound woo woo, but it is somewhere along the line before I read the book *Essentialism*, I started to embrace the idea that feeling good and feeling satisfied and feeling ease, you know,

cause I'm so bought into the wake up eager, that that mattered, and so I was going to prioritize that. So I was in, I didn't have the language to synthesize, you know, what my highest level of contribution is, but I was being guided to it by being committed to, "Well this doesn't feel right," and I have pretty decent intuition, so that was working for me. And it's like, "Something doesn't feel right or this makes me stressed out or this isn't my thing to do," and so that can be informing is this idea of paying attention to how it feels, you know, because good feels good. So if we prioritize ease and happy and having a happy day, what you're describing is, you know, you're finding that by being very clear about your intent, you know, feeling that compass. As opposed to thinking everything has value and priority, you know, the specific things do. And I think there's a lot of satisfaction anytime we choose. I think satisfaction and choice and happiness all go together, but I don't think we always know the string, and he's tied it together in this book.

Catherine: Absolutely. And I think he touches on how choice is really that, you know, it's that critical element of essentialism and it's just something that even when we don't think we're choosing, we're actually making a choice not to choose. And so every single thing that we're doing is an action associated with this stuff. And it's just, I don't know, it's a, it's challenging. I think it really is because you have to apply that set of essentialist criteria of, you know, what you were just saying, of what makes you feel good, satisfied, ease. Those are your criteria for the choices that you make. And it's, you know, like he mentions, like I said earlier, it just eliminates the whole universe of other options when you really get clear on what you want from yourself.

Suzie: So think about, share some of the tools that you use. We've talked a little bit about them and maybe there's some additional ones. I have a few of them I'm going to share too, but do you have any tools or resource, additional resources or questions that you ask that would be relevant to, you know, to help people who are struggling either within their work with you or maybe after this conversation you get some more questions from people. What are some things that you would share or point to?

Catherine: Man that is, that's a tough, that's a tough question because what I do is so hands on and so high touch and so conversation based that I think the biggest tool you have, whether as a, you know, individual listening to this podcast or as someone running a team or running a brand or running a business is the time set aside to verbalize or articulate your thoughts. And I think that this is, that the crux and the core of the essentialist purpose is to have time to think about these things. But most often every client that comes to me, they think that they know what they want, and then through a series of strategy and conversation and just asking a lot of questions, we realize that maybe it's not exactly what they thought, because they hadn't spent those 12 hours sitting in these questions and that time. And then usually on the other end of that, they have their essentialist intent, they have their core mission, and they have exactly what their vision is for themselves and their business and their life. So I think that the biggest tool is tune in time, really, you know, however that looks like for you, whether it's by yourself thinking, staying present, journaling or if you're with a strategist, having those conversations, asking the scary questions, verbalizing the big, you know, the goals. So yeah, I think time, we don't spend time to think, and that's really what I think I bring to the table, as the tool, is that time to think about it and to ask those questions. And so I don't know about tools, but it really depends on the personality and the industry, but it's really just defining, verbalizing, articulating and then sharing

that essential intent that helps my clients the most. So in whatever way that looks like for you, you know, if you're listening to this and needing to define your essential intent, I would never recommend starting with a screen, always with a piece of paper and just writing it down and crossing it out if it doesn't feel good. I think within that I've run a training that I was in, I've got, I got this one exercise in a training and then I've since done it with different clients, but it's a values exercise and you know it's been, many people do this in many different ways, but you print out a list of values, you can do this, whatever I do this with cards that you print out, you know, 150 different things that can be valued. And then you ask yourself or your team around you, you know, put on some relaxing music and you go through and you say, "Yes and no," to every single one. You say, "No, I don't value that," or, "Yes I value that." And then from your, you know, you put your no pile aside, you grab your yes pile, and then you say, "Okay, now I need to pick 30 of these." So 30 out of the remaining 70 is usually approximately what it is. So now you have to discard 40 more values and you do this again until you get all the way down to your top 3 values, and that can be a really, really challenging exercise, but the clarity that you can get from that to inform your essential intent is really beautiful. So you don't have to do it with cards, you know, you can just print out a list of values on a word doc and just cross them off. There's a lot of ways that you can do this, to really spend that hour with yourself to define your essential intent. And I just think it's time. That's the tool. That's the resource. That's the idea. Get time.

Suzie: Love it. Yes, it is, we think we don't have time to think, but we don't have time not to set aside time to think. And for me, when I started finding, because I am Miss Urgent and I love to multitask, but when I started prioritizing, feeling satisfied and at the end of the day feeling good about my day, then I started setting aside the time. And so when I want to go for a walk, I do. And every time I do, I mean I'm uber productive, but I'm telling you it's only because I take the time and that is the sacrifice.

Catherine: Yeah. And get bored.

Suzie: Get bored?

Catherine: Yeah. One of my mentors told me that a while back, she said, "You need to get bored." I was like, "What are you? No, no." I was rejecting that outright. But when you think about it, if you get with yourself where you're not, you're not having a task to do, if you get bored, your body and your mind will surface to you things that have been boiling in the back that you did not know about. And so getting bored, and I grew up with the saying, you know, my mom and dad, they always said, "Only boring people get bored," because they wanted us to go entertain ourselves as kids. Right?

Suzie: Right,

Catherine: So took that into adulthood, but now I think getting bored is one of the most creative things we can do. I really do.

Suzie: Yep. Yep. Yep. Let the mind let, I mean cause I do believe our inner self is talking to us all the time and guiding us, whatever you want to name that. But we are getting guidance all the time and if we are never quiet and we never, that's why the tune in time, you know, is so

important. And it could be a day, it could be a, I love your values exercise, anything where we stop and we think about the big picture or we just stop and let things come to us. It's the muse. You hear people talking about the muse, you know, that's powerful, powerful. And it's interesting tune in time, this is something I talk about all the time, tune in time, if you just did 15 minutes a day, that's 1% of your day, and at the end of the year, that's almost 92 hours of quiet time. Isn't that something?

Catherine: That's amazing. That's incredible. Because I mean what else would you be doing with those 92 hours? That's the question for me. You know, it's like if I wasn't doing tune in time, where would those 92 hours be spent? Would those be on essentialist things or non-essentialist things, and that's wonderful to see the compounding effect of taking time for yourself.

Suzie: Yes. And he talks about it in the book in regarding, maybe just did it on the Tim Ferriss Podcast, I can't recall, but you know, taking a day or you know, doing the retreats and they have a whole discussion on that podcast too. So quickly I'll mention this and then we'll get into the rest of what we're going to talk about today, but here are some of the tools that I share and I'll put links to these, my daily planning, I do a list of 6 and I've got articles on this and I've talked about it and I did podcast around it. It's like list of 6, these are the 6 things I absolutely will do today. You do better on having that list of 6. And I do that every day. I won't allow myself put more than 6, I might get more than 6 done, but there are 6 things that absolutely have to be done. My thing was to get clear on, you know, my biggest contribution, big picture, but daily, not wasting time and knowing what has to be done, it keeps the overwhelm away, tune and time is one. Revisiting all of his questions, you know, in his book, to me in the fitness thing is big, sitting down and you probably this reviewing at the end of the year, you know, what did I like about...

Catherine: Oh...where your time was spent?

Suzie: Where was my time spent? What do I feel good about? What have I accomplished? Going back and just revisiting how much you've accomplished, we forget how much we've accomplished. And I think that's always a surprise for myself and I make my husband listen to me share it, since I'm kind of an independent and I don't really want to burden the people at Carter with, I'll be like, "Honey, here's a list of all the things that I accomplished this year." He's like, "Okay," he listens.

Catherine: He's like, "I know, I was there."

Suzie: "Are you done yet?" No, he listens. So he teases and then there's an exercise that I do a coaching exercise, and I'll put a link to it in the show notes, it's 80/20 rule, you know that we need to spend 80% of our time on the 20% that matters the most, which is almost essentialism, but not quite, but there's a good exercise.

Catherine: He has a different one in the book, the 80/20, he has 20% of our efforts produce 80% of our results. So I think that rule goes to so many things.

Suzie: Yes, yes, yes. And if I'm on the phone with somebody and they're overwhelmed, sometimes I have a whole little exercise that I'll go through that has again, "Let's lay all your projects out," you know, and just in the moment to try to help them clarify what's important and what can you delegate, you know, what has to happen right now. Yeah. So those are all...

Catherine: Yeah, it all goes back to time and an intense control over and not control in, you know, clenched fists, but an intense analysis and intentionality with your time, those 92 hours, those 15 minutes, of all of it, having that, you know, on the call, having that time, it's the one resource that's finite we can't get more of. So you have to use what you have better.

Suzie: Yes. And then in the moment, just knowing, to me, what, the minute, since I told you I am always focusing on how I'm feeling, the minute I start to feel a little panic or I start to feel stressed or a little angry or tense cause I do have strong feelings, I stop and I'm like, "Okay, go back, go take a walk, go get quiet, go write, go prioritize," because what I'm thinking, I think what I end up thinking is, everything's important so I got to get all this stuff done. It's like, "No, stop and think what's most important right now."

Catherine: Yeah. Absolutely.

Suzie: That helps tremendously. So wonderful discussion about essentialism, let's carry that over into talking a little bit about you and your career. I think you're brilliant at what you do and I'm just excited to see where the rest of your career is going to go, since you have a bright future ahead of you, but talk a little bit about who's most influenced you in your career so far and some of the things they said or did that matter to you

Catherine: That again, it's like boiling down essentialism, the 3 things, who has most influenced? I mean what does most look like? It's impossible. I am just, I don't know if it is so much as a who, as it is a how, I guess.

Suzie: Oh, okay, good.

Catherine: It is so challenging because I've always been such an avid reader and researcher and just a consumer of information, and through that process, and I know you, you know you've done this as well, but you adopt these mentors that have absolutely no idea you exist. But you know, they are your mentor, I feel like I've had conversations with them, they don't know who I am. So I think, you know, it's who has most influenced me in my life and career; it's just been so many countless people over the years. I've been so blessed to have incredible professors that have become mentors and have become friends. And so I think starting from, you know, education and my Masters program, which I have a Masters Degree in Strategic Communication from Westminster College in Salt Lake City, and that program and the professors and the coaching and the mentoring, all of that, I think drastically influences my life and career today even though I'm not in that program anymore. And then of course I've got people like Michael Bay Rue, who is a partner at a design firm called Pentagram. And David Airey, who's an Irish identity designer and Phil Knight, the founder of Nike and Donald Miller, the author and founder of StoryBrand, and then Chris Doe the founder of The Future, I mean, I could list for days these people who I've had conversations with and they have no idea. So I don't know, again, I don't know if it's so much as a who, as a how, and it's a how of how they are, what they do, and I watched that and I'm so curious about it and I'm so intent on adopting the good from it, to incorporate my own life. And of course, you know, my parents who are both entrepreneurs themselves and then my many clients who have taught me about their industries and their experiences and the countries that they're from or the States that they're from, who is almost everybody but conglomerated into a how. And so I think what it comes down to is that all

of these people, what they do, say and share, sort of ends up being 3 main principles. And that's, I guess, the who is everyone who does these principles, if that makes sense, but these principles being, a commitment to excellence in all things, an insatiable curiosity and an undeniable work ethic. And every one of my real mentors, my book mentors, my mentors who have no idea I exist, my parents, my clients, they all have these main principles, which are principles I admire on such a fundamental value level. And so I think, I guess it's everyone that I've encountered that has these principles that have led me to adopt these in my own life. And that's, I guess what they in share that was most useful to me, and it's just really those 3 things. But I mean, I could look at my, you know, I'm in my office right now, and I could look over at my bookshelf and probably name 40 people, you know, Greg McKeown would be in it.

Suzie: A lot of influences. Yeah, totally, he would be up at the top. So one of the things you talk about when you describe yourself in your Bio, and it's something that I believe is very important, so it stood out to me and you do not always see it in other consultants, you see them talking about it, but not the actually the living of it. And I've experienced it. You live it, I see you living it and how you communicate it. And I'm sensitive to it because I value it a lot and I'm always trying to be really excellent at it and I'm not always excellent at it, but it's seeking to understand before trying to be understood. Who modeled that for you the most?

Catherine: Wow, that is a really deep question cause this was the first personal development phrase I ever adopted in my whole life. So back when I was probably like 12 or 13 years old, I think my mom introduced me to it, because it's a butchered version of a Deepak Chopra quote, if I recall correctly, it might also have been adopted by Stephen Covey.

Suzie: It was a topic of his book for sure, yeah. But to me that's so important as a consultant, is to them try to understand people, or as a human, you know, to just try to understand where people are. And we all say it, but we don't all live it and we don't, as a consultant, I'm particularly sensitive, if I'm working with other consultants to help me. And when they're not good at it, I don't like it. But you're good at it, and I'm curious.

Catherine: It's hard, it's a practice, I dunno, I feel like my parents, I can't speak highly enough about them, but they really modeled this for me and my brothers growing up. And even, you know, ironically the way they disciplined us, this was kind of a funny side note, but they, our discipline, if we were to get into trouble, was to write an essay, my Dad would say to write an essay. He would make us write an essay about whatever it was, I mean, whether it was, we had, you know, mouth off about something that was incorrect and he would make us go research it, you know, whatever it was, or you know, if we would get into trouble, my Mom would make us write letters to ourselves, to our parents and then to sort of the universe and apologize or get right with yourself. And so for me, I guess the way they modeled that, I don't even know if intentional, I'll have to ask them, but intentionally they always sought for us to understand ourselves within trying to explain who we were. So I think the seeking understanding before trying to state something, I think that's just ingrained in how I personally process the world. And then I also think it's just really beneficial in treating humans, just like you said, this is a very human thing and to really seek, I don't know, to understand, I dunno, I guess that just goes back honestly to those 3 principles of having that insatiable curiosity and that doesn't need to be insatiable curiosity for yourself, it can be an insatiable curiosity, and that doesn't have to be

insatiable curiosity about yourself, it can and insatiable curiosity about your client, about your coworker. It's honestly curiosity, I feel is the best medicine for a negative emotion, that's why that's so important for me. And so that's where that seeking understanding comes into play.

Suzie: Yeah, yeah. I find, I don't even, I don't like to ask for help from others until I know that they are these kinds of people, the thinking to understand, and it's just, I dunno. So that's awesome. And I love that you adopted that at 12 years old and I love that you had to write essays when you got in trouble. How perfect is that. How else are you going to..

Catherine: I could never run for political office or anything because my parents have got these essays, stacks somewhere in the basement, or something, who knows what they say, I don't even remember what they say.

Suzie: Yeah. I love that.

Catherine: It was definitely a disciplinary technique, for all you parents out there.

Suzie: Yeah. That's awesome. So for me, I'll share. So my mother was very influential on two sides. One, the positive side was, she very creative, she's a free thinker. I mean they were reading *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* and she was doing health food and read the *East West Journal* when nobody else was doing that, you know? And she's a positive, expresses positivism and optimism and learning and an encourager, very creative. And then on the other side, I mean she's the whole reason I care so much about wake up eager because she was so talented and so beautiful, but she never saw it, you know, for herself. She's with us today and she has more confidence, and I've talked about it before, but she, she as it when I was growing up, she never just saw her beauty, you know, she never saw her goodness and she struggled, you know, to be happy and to feel good. And I, as the youngest, I was always trying to help her. You know, I'd make a cake so she'd be happy, you know, so she struggled with things and it's better today, you know, as she's going to be 80 this year. But I just remember, just wanting her to see, I wanted her to wake up eager, I wanted her to see her value. So, she gave me so much, and so to me, the wake up eager thing, and she didn't for a very long time and a lot of life passed by. So to me, it is so personal, this whole thing, you know, is helping people get to where they want to go, is that, you know, and I don't try to turn anybody, I've healed a lot of that, you know, in regard to it, and I don't try to take people places or anything, but I do want to put it out there. And so, you know, when I have information, that's helpful, it really makes my heart sing. And I think that that's my highest level of contribution. And I think I made that decision a long time ago. It's made me very determined. So while she gave me all these gifts positive, it also made me very determined that I'm going to craft a life that works, that is happy and good and not that hurt, you know?

Catherine: That's beautiful.

Suzie: But yeah, so interesting, so I think I just, it's made me so determined, you know, a great influence.

Catherine: That's beautiful Suzie, thank you for sharing that.

Suzie: Aww, thank you. It's wonderful to go celebrate, we're going actually next weekend to go celebrate my Mom and my Dad's 80th birthday, so it is wonderful to see her, and actually it's funny, you know, in the past couple of years, my Dad's kind of losing his memory, and so she's now stepped up to the plate and she's actually the most focused that I've ever seen her and the most determined. So it's interesting. You know, how life unfolds. So it's all good.

Catherine: Yeah.

Suzie: So you said you had a ton of books and education and you've shared, we've talked about essentialism, pick your top couple in regards to, if you could only share a couple of books, what else besides *Essentialism* would you suggest? And we have people listening that have their own businesses, we have consultants, we have leaders, you know, and that vein, and in the work you do, what's your favorites? What are the books you want to give away or give to people most?

Catherine: These are the hardest questions. How am I supposed to pick favorites when I consume everything?

Suzie: It's like picking your favorite children. It's like picking your favorite children.

Catherine: It's like, "I can't do that." I don't know. It is so difficult. So again, it's really super hard to distill down because I think, you know, I've watched, you know, while we're talking about Moms, my Mom as an entrepreneur, she has run for the past 20 or so years, a mastermind book club.

Suzie: Oh cool.

Catherine: Yeah. So I have over the years been, "Okay, what are you reading?" I'll go.

Suzie: That's why you have 800 books.

Catherine: I've just been raised. I mean, both my parents have their libraries, I mean, it's just like, reading is such a huge thing, so it's so hard to distill down. But I think the biggest one most recently that I can think about, and maybe we'll bring in a little bit of the assessment information here because I am a very, very high D on the DISC profile. So that can mean a lot of really challenging interactions. And I'm sure you could speak to it much better than I can, what the archetypes of that sort of personality can be. But I read by recommendation of another mentor, a real one, not a book one, a real mentor of mine, she recommended *The Culture Code* by Daniel Coyle and it was this absolute huge mindset shift for me, taking me, taking me out of just productivity and bringing in the human element of this. So it was absolutely huge when I first read it. And in the book he talks about this concept, you know, what builds exceptional teams. And he talks about belonging cues and I'll let you read the book so you can understand. But it really transformed my interpersonal communication to balance, I'm a high D, but I'm surrounded by super high Is. Everywhere I go. I'm just surrounded by high Is. And so it really helped me transform my interpersonal communication with them, and to engage again that curiosity that for me is the perfect antidote to a negative emotion. So yeah, I can't recommend that one enough, *The Culture Code* by Daniel Coyle, he is also the author of *The Talent Code*. But again that was a book that for 6 years he was going around and interviewing and, I think it was 6 years, and he

was interviewing and asking questions, and it was from his consulting experience, but it came out and it was an absolutely amazing trend of how to build high performing teams and how to engage with high performing teams, it was just absolutely wonderful. And then the other one, because I'm only picking two, because...

Suzie: They're like your children, it is so hard to pick.

Catherine: I don't know how I am supposed to do this, but *The Compound Effect* by Darren Hardy.

Suzie: Yes. Yes.

Catherine: You know it, anything needs more not be said, like it's just, it's a step-by-step system to really like, hone in. I think reading, you know, if I were to prescribe a set of books, I would say read *Essentialism*, get real clear on your essential intent, read *The Culture Code* so you can see the team and the people around you and then read *The Compound Effect* to put that all into practice. And that would be my...

Suzie: I like it.

Catherine: If I were giving 3 to anyone, I might stick in *Atomic Habits* by James Clear in there too maybe. But I would give those 3.

Suzie: Three plus one.

Catherine:

Catherine: Yes. Three plus this optional reading, those would be my one. That's a very hard question. I'm going to throw it right back at you. Which ones, you get three.

Suzie: Oh, I love it. I love the formula though, so I think that's really smart. The *Essentialism*, you know, read that first. *The Culture Code* compounded, by the way, we'll have all of these on the show notes and then *Atomic Habits*, we'll have links to all of this, so that's awesome.

Catherine: Beautiful.

Suzie: My favorites and I do have books everywhere as well, but my favorite, and it always has a special place in my heart because I think it fell off the shelf, you know how that happens, it was in the 1990s and it was *7 Habits of Highly Effective People* and I probably, I have probably read that book 80 times. I haven't read it lately, but just, I just remember when I first read it, that it was like, it was like the sun, you know, shined, you know, it was like, it was like I was just new out of college, I was working at NCR Corporation, I was trying to figure out, I was in Human Resources and I was working with the General Manager and the head of HR and it was like all a swirl and it's like that book was like my anchor. There is so much good there, it is just so timeless, you just can go back and revisit it. So that's powerful. One skill set that when I started my business, I knew I could be effective and I was getting good feedback, but I people would hire me and I would think, "Oh, I didn't handle that really well," and they'd still hire me back. So it was like, "Okay, I'm doing something right." You know, cause I thought I'd kind of messed that up, but I knew I needed some processes and so, and I actually had him on my podcast, which

was a great moment for me because he's somebody I really respect, Michael Wilkinson, and he wrote a book call *The Secrets of Facilitation* and that I carry it around for probably the first 5 years of my business and read it every second I had and then applied it. And it's this facilitation technique. And he's got another book out now. But anyway, that *The Secrets of Facilitation* by Michael Wilkinson, I would say that's another one that I felt like it was the same kind of thing where I was asking for insight and boom, there it was. And it was exactly what I needed. I mean he's kind of distilled down what effective people do when they're in front of groups. Like everything from how you kick off a meeting to when people disagree, how you help them make decisions. I mean it's just really good.

Catherine: Sounds amazing, I am going to buy it.

Suzie: So yeah, it is awesome. And his whole business and everything he does, it is episode number 60 in the podcast, so I'll put a link to that in the show notes. And then I'm like you, have so many other things, I would say maybe two other things that probably impacted me the most, one is the assessments, because of how much it's taught me about myself. And then all, every time I get to dialogue with someone about their results, I learn some other nuance or some other standing about myself or about other people. Hartman's work in the TriMetrix part has been very important, understanding like how we think and make decisions. It's helped me be more compassionate, helped me find more compassion and patience with my parents. You know, people where you can have some old patterns like, "Well, why did they do that?" And then once I understand, you know, Hartman's, you know, the way, at least the Hartman value profile part of the assessment, you know, helps me understand how we think and the lack of clarity we sometimes have and how that can impact our inability to be available. Or you know, I'm so much more patient with friends and people, cause I also have a very high D, so no wonder we are in sync in my style. So that, the Hartman, would have been just you know, maybe even the most for me, but then to be able to share it with people. So I guess I'll stop at that. But I'm like you, it's like your children, like how do you, how do you pick?

Catherine: Well, I'm bringing it back to *Essentialism* he quotes, who does he quote in that book? Oh, it's, I dunno, it's an author, a famous author from, it is skipping my mind right now, but, Kill your darlings. Kill your darlings. Even when it breaks your egocentric little scribblers heart, kill your darlings." And I think that all the time when you have to pick your at, you have to pick your favorite, you have to edit your life, you've got to kill your darlings.

Suzie: Oh, that is great. So you have really, you're really owning this book, man. It's just that this awesome, "Kill your darlings."

Catherine: It is life changing.

Suzie: Yes, it is life changing. So talk about, since we do, we're coming towards the last couple of questions, wake up eager here and we just had this podcast is a result of last year where I did the Wake Up Eager Wednesday Tips and I did it around mind, body, spirit, doing a little bit different focus this year in 2020. But my number one, you know, is the essentialism. So that's why we're doing this podcast. But talk about for you, your mind, body, and spirit, what is some of yours, things you do regularly to help you wake up eager.

Catherine: Yeah, it's interesting because they all go back to essentialism. I'm just realizing apparently everything in my life goes back to essentialism.

Suzie: You an essentialism nerd, in the best kind of way.

Catherine: I am, I am, it is kind of an odd little thing, once you adopt it, it becomes so much a part of you. It's almost hard to separate what isn't that, you know, if you're living it right and everything is part of your essential intent. So for me, I think it's so interesting to split it into mind, body and spirit because those are so critical. And for me, my mind is I've got to take care of that, if I were placing priority, my mental clarity, my brain functioning, all of that stuff is so important for me. And I think that's where your tune in time, which now I've adopted in my vernacular, but doing that, that tune in time where after every meeting or conversation I just take a moment to seep I that information, gather my thoughts and softly, unlike this high productive non-essentialist priding myself on busy-ness that I was before, take this time to softly transition my mind to the next object or tasks or whatever that is. So that to me, that mental clarity, that tune in time, it's just critical.

Suzie: Okay. Can I stop you there for a second? Softly transition my mind, I love that, softly transition my mind. What great language, that is awesome. And for a high D that's not, that doesn't come natural.

Catherine: Oh no, it doesn't, it's a trained practice and I think that mind, body and spirit for me because I'm such a high D, and I spent so many years in that non-essentialist practice of being so busy and not necessarily treating my body, mind, spirit with the gentleness that it deserves. I think gentle and soft and all those things are deeply ingrained in my mind, body and spirit, wake up eager practices because they have to be, because they don't come naturally. Yeah, that's super important for me. But I think other in the mind area, I don't drink coffee anymore. I have forsaken that amount of caffeine because I was relying on it. And now I drink MUD/WTR, M-U-D-W-T-R, it's an adaptogenic drink. It's got Rishi mushrooms or Rishi Tri, it's got mushrooms, Ashwagandha, kind of a weird little, it tastes like dirt, but, that to me, helps to manage my stress, but adaptogenic drinks and supplements to really take care of not only my mind as in my mental clarity, but also my literal brain and it's functioning. So that kind of bleeds into body a little bit. And then my only body one, I guess, I guess it's not the only, but my biggest body one is, and you know, it goes back to essentialism, but it's sleep. You've got to sleep. And Greg, he talks about in the book that we have to protect the asset and we are the asset. So your body and your sleep and your exercise and your mind and what you, you know, your hydration, all of these things, you have to protect the assets. So that to me, whatever it takes to protect the asset is what I'm doing. But sleep for me is huge because it's when my body does what it does, it heals itself, and it does the things I can't consciously make it do. And so that period, I will not sacrifice that for anything. Sleep and hydration are my body things, those are my critical pillars, have to have them.

Suzie: Love it.

Catherine: And then for spirit, this one's interesting because it's easy for me to just immediately think that my spirit portion is my spirituality. So in thinking about my spirit and my soul and what feeds it, I kind of do what you do, I guess my, I don't call it my tune in time, but it's my morning

routines now, another book we're throwing out there while we're offering some tools, *Miracle Morning*. But my morning routine is to be present with myself in whatever way I sense that my spirit needs. So sometimes that's reading, sometimes it's walking, sometimes it's resting, sometimes it's you know, coffee with my mom or you know, doing some sort of interaction, whatever that means, I'm really listening into my spirit in the morning of what do I need, because it's not always the same. And I'm a pattern time blocking kind of gal and some, and it's just the one time I have to be flexible because what my body needs and what my spirit needs, it will tell me when I give it that time and that space. But, so that's sort of, that's my spirit one. And then of course, you know, just cultivating a spirit of generosity in all things for all people to the best that I can. And that's really, that's what feeds my soul and expands my soul and my spirit.

Suzie: That's beautiful. That's beautiful. So back to, real quick, you're not drinking coffee, but you're drinking mushrooms, adaptogenics, I've seen the 4 sigmatics, what's mud? How did you spell the MUD/WTR? I want to make sure we put a link to that.

Catherine: MUD/WTR and it was one of those, I just fell victim to advertising, I was like, this advertising was really good, I should just try it. And then over time I just completely got rid of coffee. I just don't, I don't drink it. And it's a coffee alternative. It's got all organic ingredients for health and performance benefits, it's got 1/7 the caffeine of coffee. So if you're sensitive to caffeine or you're trying to cut caffeine, it's a good substitute for it, but it's got like turmeric, it's got a bunch of mushroom types in it, it's got Rishi, it's got masala chai, it's got cacao, it's got like all of the things. And I put a little MCT oil and coconut oil in there for creamer and it's just, I've got it right in front of me right now. Well, it's gone, but I've got the container in front of me. It's just adaptogenic sort of things, just trying to bio hack, I guess, if you will.

Suzie: Yes. Yes. I love everything that you shared and did want to mention here, we were talking about being a high D and we're talking about, you were saying about, you know, being gentle and soft, the tendency for a high dominant style, the blind spot is, is that we can be, think everything is urgent and so that we can come across, we may feel kind and gentle inside, but we can come across, if we don't manage our style, as being abrupt or as being urgent or you know, not, we don't often come across as gentle and soft unless we're aware of it. So it can look very driven, so anybody who's listening, I just want them to touch base on that, because what everything you're talking about is showing you, because this is the thing that bothers me when people learn their style and then say, "Well, that's just how I am," and what this shows and what you're demonstrating is that we can take a strength, still use the strength, and then manage ourselves in a way to our own happy, you know, which is this, these words, softly transitioning, being more gentle, you know, all of those things that you're talking about. So we aren't just our style, that is one piece of who we are. So anyway...

Catherine: Well exactly, Suzie, I think it just, that's perfect too because I think these assessments that you do, they are so incredible and so revealing and they're really for people who like to do this essentialist thing, have their essential intent and perform at their highest capacity, that requires knowing yourself and a little bit of extra knowledge that you may think you have, but having that boost of these assessments is just absolutely critical. I think towards long-term sustainable growth as an individual.

Suzie: It can be helpful for sure. So mine real quickly, I'll say is for mind, it's the tune in time, it's the commitment to ease happiness, you know, that wake up eager is the goal. And so when I, any moment that that starts slipping away, tune in time helps me understand or feel the higher energy by being quiet, doing some of what you talked about, listening and just let. And so when I slip out of the feeling better, I know because of the tune in time that I am not at my peak in feeling good. So it really guides me. And then the questions in essentialism over this past year, I've got a way to go to be as strong and functional around it as you are, which is a narrow goal. It's awesome. But having those questions in front of me is helping me. And even just having the dialogue today about it, it's like, "Okay, and going back and listening to the book again so that I stay clear on my intent," and I'm a lot of way there, but there's always work. You know, as I was listening to the book again, podcast again, I was like, "Ah man," I thought it's so many things that I'm doing that aren't essential so.

Catherine: That's why I read it every year, you have to, you've got to read every year.

Suzie: So around body right now, what's top of mind is intermittent fasting, just did an episode on that, that's part of the tips, so this little series. I have a Peloton, I like to work out, but right now my thing is the Peloton, which I enjoy completely. I like walking my dogs and I'm really big into nutrition. And so one of the things that I like to have are green smoothies, so a lot of stuff there, shock it full of all kinds of nutrition. I've actually written articles about it and stuff cause I like them so much. Spirit wise I'd go back to T & T, tune in time. Journaling, so anytime I get confused or unsettled if I, I'll sit and write. And oftentimes what I write is just lists of appreciation. So I get off the topic and I just think about all the things I value and appreciate. And then once I kind of go back to the topic, it's like there's some clarity there that wasn't there before. And then the community is, you know, dinner with my husband every night, that's the commitment we made when we first got married, we weren't quite doing that cause we're both pretty busy people, he is an Executive at a company and we decided somewhere along the way, "Okay, every night we're going to do dinner." So we do dinner every night. I cook some thing, we sit down, we may or may not talk, but we, you know, depending on how tired we are, but we sit together and then always having date night somewhere.

Catherine: Awesome.

Suzie: So if you could have a billboard anywhere, what would it be? What would it say? And you can put anything on it you want, any message that you want to give to the world, what would your message be?

Catherine: Okay. Okay. So, it seems a little weird, but I would just want a solid billboard of some color, I don't know, I'd have to do some color psychology research to determine...

Suzie: Of course.

Catherine: Because I'm a Brand Specialist. And I would just want simple text and I would just want it to say, "This is your beginning."

Suzie: Ooh.

Catherine: And that's all. Cause no matter where you are, how old you are, where you see it, when you're driving, this is your beginning. Every single moment is the beginning for you. And I think it's the most freeing, the most liberating and the most exciting message I could give to people, and that is what I would want to say.

Suzie: I love that. I love it. Cause it is, it's the idea of, "Okay, I can begin again now," you know, and so the past formed it, so today's a new day. I mean, there's been songs, "The sun will come out tomorrow," you know, so, but I love that, you would have to find the perfect color. I bet you would pick perfect color, message of hope. Mine would be, "Embrace happiness, create ease."

Catherine: Oh, I love it.

Suzie: So, you know, it's just idea of...

Catherine: Such a command, I love it.

Suzie: "Embrace happiness, create ease." Because embrace means, "Okay, I'm going to let the happiness in," because to me happiness is trying to come at us in a million different angles and sometimes we just decide not to let it in, you know, thinking that we've got to struggle or whatever, so I'm going to embrace it and that it's our choice we can choose to create ease, which is why I got so excited when I did read *Essentialism*, it's like, he's showing us another way, or for me in particular, at the time, and now how to create even more ease.

Catherine: Absolutely. Yeah. To tune into the present, everything about creating ease and that's amazing. I love it. I love how it a the command, it's like, "Create ease, just do it. Just do it."

Suzie: Just do it. Choose. Because I think anytime we feel stressed, a lot of times we think we don't have choice and that's where the stress is coming from. Anything that's really stressing us out, it's like we think we don't have a choice. So we are coming to our last question, one last bit of advice or wisdom about essentialism, and it could be several bits, I don't have to hold you to one, because you've got a lot of wisdom.

Catherine: I've got the one.

Suzie: You do?

Catherine: I've got the one, but with a caveat. So I have the one, but then if it's all right, I would like to share a brief passage from essentialist. It's a really beautiful one.

Suzie: Please. Yes. Okay.

Catherine: Okay. So my one bit of advice for anyone listening, any leader, any non-essentialist, any budding essentialist, anyone, is that to become an essentialist requires a heightened awareness of your ability to choose. And I think it goes back to what you just said a moment ago about stress, everything around essentialism is about choice and that you have your ability to choose, but all it takes is for you to be aware of that. That's my one.

Suzie: Yes. Be aware.

Catherine: It's kind of a thing; it's kind of a thing. But then this passage that I wanted to share because, it's just brief, it is like 3 sentences and it's from nearing the end of the book and it's Greg when he's talking about what this looks like when you have become an essentialist and not everything is applicable, I, you know, some of it I don't think is absolutely applicable, but it might be to your listeners or to someone coming across this podcast when they're curious about essentialism, but it says, "Once you become an essentialist, you will find that you aren't like anybody else. When other people are saying yes, you will find yourself saying no. When other people are doing, you will find yourself thinking, when other people are speaking, you will find yourself listening. When others are in the spotlight vying for attention, you will find yourself waiting on the sidelines until it is time to shine. While other people are padding their resumes and building out their LinkedIn profiles, you will be building a career of meaning. While other people are complaining, read, bragging about how busy they are, you will just be smiling sympathetically, unable to relate. While other people are living a life of stress and chaos, you will be living a life of impact and fulfillment. In many ways, to live as an essentialist in are too many things all the time society, is an act of quiet revolution.

Suzie: Ooh, that's awesome.

Catherine: It is good stuff.

Suzie: I was writing down all of the like positives. So thinking, listening, waiting, career of meaning, life of fulfillment and act of revolution.

Catherine: Yup. It's just beautiful. And I think what's that so interesting about, I'm so glad you found this book Suzie cause this is the essence of ease and I'm so glad that this helped reinforce that for you.

Suzie: I love that. I'm writing that down too.

Catherine: But now I need to hear your advice.

Suzie: So two things I said is, this question, "Is this the best use of my time right now?" So that to me, that question is, it will help if you can't somehow get to, "Okay, I'm going to be at this big intent, I'm not ready to do all that now." One very easy way to step in is to write this down, put it on the top of your calendar and every morning write it down again. And I like to set up my days, I set up my weeks in advance in regard to what I'm going to focus on, priorities. But also at the end of every day, I set up the next day, you know, my mind and I list. So, you know, go back and say, "How did I use my time today? Is this the best use of my time right now," as you plan the next day. And then the second thing that I think we all struggle with and is the biggest challenge to this, is to remember it's not selfish to say "No."

Catherine: Oh, dabs right at the heart of it.

Suzie: Yeah. Yeah.

Catherine: It's not selfish to say, "No." Oh my gosh.

Suzie: And we think it is, you know, and, and we can say yes to the priorities and the other stuff, we may disappoint some people. And I get that my husband's to be more accommodating

sometimes than I am personally, and I will say no more than he does. Now he says no more at work. And I say no more personally. And so, and sometimes I think, “Oh man, I'm such a Fuddy Dud, you know, I'd rather do something else than go do this other thing.” And he'll say yes to accommodate. But anyway, so it's a statement to myself too. I need to be doing more of that around my work. So...

Catherine: Beautiful. I love it. I absolutely love it.

Suzie: Well, it's been an awesome conversation. Thank you for, one, for many things, but one, sharing all of your wisdom around essentialism and the way you've taken hold of this, and two me play along by making this a duo conversation.

Catherine: I love it. Well, thank you so much for having me. I just, the part of my essential intent is to help other people find theirs. So I'm just so glad that, you know, this opportunity came up and that it was in line with my essential intent and just to talk with you and share our fun, yet challenging insights, from adopting this process in our own lives.

Suzie: It's been awesome.

Catherine: Alrighty. Well thanks so much for having me on the podcast.

Suzie: All right. I hope you enjoyed that episode as much as I enjoyed being able to participate in it and bringing it to you. I loved so much of what Catherine shared, and particularly near the end, just as a reminder, have a heightened awareness that you have the ability to choose. That is so much wisdom. And then maybe go back and re-listen to playback that statement at the end about once you're in essentialism, how you'll be thinking more, you'll be listening more, you're going to have a career of meaning, you're not going to be able to relate to being stressed out and too busy, you will have a life of impact and fulfillment. And it is an act of quiet revolution. So it's like, it's nice to have a vision and just hearing her read that statement, that'd be a good way to stay inspired and to keep that future in mind. If you're not feeling as much of that as you'd like to feel right now, and just remember, it's not selfish to say “No.” That's something we're all learning all the time.

Suzie: So if you have feedback, reach out to us, go to the show notes, pricelessprofessional.com/essentialism. You'll see all my contact information there and you'll see the SpeakPipe, little purple microphone, click that, leave us some feedback. I'd also love some feedback around what you do for your own tune in time. I'll share that on that episode. So what do you do for quiet time? Do you have a certain book you read? A certain way you write? Do you go on a retreat every year? Do you do something every day? Just what do you do for tune in time? I'd love to hear it.

Suzie: So we are doing the series and an episode number 66 is my top mind tip and it's pricelessprofessional.com/essentialism, that's this episode. The next episode is pricelessprofessional.com/fasting, and that's my number one body tip for 2019 and going into 2020 is intermittent fasting. We talk to Amy Land about her experience with intermittent fasting. She was a Human Resource Director and now moved into being a Health Coach. And then episode number 68 is going to dive deep into tune in time, and that's pricelessprofessional.com/tuneintime. It's all one word. And so I'd love to have some of your



insight around tune in time. I've captured what other people do, their own personal retreats and time they take to think and creating space. So I can't wait to record that as well. It's been super fun. Just such a blessing to be able to do this podcast and to have people like you listening. Thank you. Greatly appreciated, and big thanks for Catherine too, for taking the time to be here today and for her being, using her talents and gifts in the world. So many blessings, we'll talk to you on the next episode. Take care.

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