

Voiceover Artist 0:00

Are you ready to manage your work and personal world better to live a fulfilling productive life, then you've come to the right place productivity cast, the weekly show about all things productivity. Here, your host Ray Sidney-Smith and Augusto Pinaud with Francis Wade and Art Gelwicks.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 0:17

And Welcome back, everybody to productivity cast, the weekly show about all things personal productivity, I'm Ray Sidney Smith.

Augusto Pinaud 0:23

I am Augusto Pinaud,

Art Gelwicks 0:24

I am Art Gelwicks

Raymond Sidney-Smith 0:24

Welcome, gentlemen, and welcome to our listeners to this episode where we are going to be talking about the idea of how we would tailor the bullet journal method to our own productivity systems. I've been giving this quite a lot of thought recently. And so I thought we would have an episode where we would all talk about the Bujo method and how we would actually use this in our system, even if we don't just kind of how we would so that you as listeners may incorporate some of the skills, some of the techniques that we have developed over time. How we would develop them using the bullet journal method. And so what we'll do is we'll do just a quick recap of boo Joe, to kind of aware of what it's all about. And then we will we will talk about ways in which we can supplement our systems in both analog and digital and we'll go from there. So let's let's start with what is the bullet journal method? art? Would you like to kick us off and tackle the the kind of top level explanation of what Bujo is?

Art Gelwicks 1:29

Sure at the highest level. Bujo is really the brainchild of gentleman by the name of writer Carol. The bullet journal method is originally started as an analogue approach to keeping track of notes, tasks, activities, and basically keeping everything in one spot. focused around month activity in de activity but it is designed to be extremely simple Extremely adaptable. It's one of those things that there is no a lot of predefined structures and templates, there are now in the marketplace because it's so popular, but it is at its most basic. Each day, you're keeping track of the notes that you have from the day tasks, activities, all within just a couple of pages of a paper journal, and then continuing to build that over time. It's, it's a definite understatement of what's involved in the system. But at its most basic, I would say that bullet journaling happens to be one of the few systems that somebody could pick up and start to do within about a half hour.

One of the things that for me, it's really, really interesting about the bullet journal is that it requires zero knowledge about productivity. You know, one of the things that you find in other systems is that you need to at least understand the basics of productivity. You know, the bullet journal came as a solution for people who have zero knowledge. If people have zero knowledge of productivity organization or any of those things. They can come read the book, read the basic. Before the book, there was even a basic explanation on it start running an over complicated over time or get more sophisticated over time depending on how you want it to look at that. And I think that was one of the biggest strengths that the bullet journal bring. It was for many people, the introduction to productivity on a on a current world where we have a gap between I don't know anything about productivity or I am an expert in productivity, there is a big big gap between those two.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 3:39

And Ryder really explains bullet journal method as a as basically a Venn diagram. On one side you have productivity practices, and on the other side you have mindfulness and when where the Venn diagram overlaps, you know, two circles as they merge together and they overlap that central part What he considers the bullet journal method. And he calls this intentionality the idea of taking kind of the essentialism model from Greg MacAllan and saying, what are the vital what are the vital things in my life that need to get done and tracking those and maintaining those so that I'm able to focus and then to attend to the specific actions, focus on the goals and then attend to the specific actions that are necessary to move those important things forward in my life. And so yeah, that's the that's the bullet journal kind of in a nutshell, it's it is an analog system that Ryder Carroll developed because he had had some some attentional deficits. And maybe he is he was diagnosed with ADHD. I can't remember specifically from the book but I believe he was diagnosed with ADHD and he was feeling the stigma of it. Didn't know why he wasn't able to get things done. And this Bujo method was derived from his frustrations, his trial and error from all of this. I will, I will say that from my perspective, he kind of talks about this idea that there are these productivity principles. And then on the other side is mindfulness and or practice of, of the bullet journal method. I tend to disagree with that. I think there there are the traditional classical Greek, you know, components of theory, practice and performance. And so, there's kind of like a there, there are actually three circles in that Venn diagram. And so those three overlapping circles, the center part then becomes what he's talking about, perhaps, of intentionality, I would call it focus. And that's a that's an important kind of thing to kind of keep in mind here is that I think that there is there is learning productivity principles, as Augusto said. I think to a great extent, people who come to the bullet journal method can just implement the tool and get going and not

necessarily have to have a background in productivity principles to begin with, although I would argue that we all have some level of it from being productive members of society. If you if you got to adulthood, you probably have some level of stuff going on.

Art Gelwicks 6:25

The thing that's really nice about the bullet journal method is it's one of the few methods I found that lends itself to the digital digitally resistant, if I want to tag them as that when I look at and talk to people who are like, Look, I don't want anything complicated. I want all these online things. I don't want to try and tack track tasks on my phone. This is a perfect bridge type of solution for them. In many cases, it can be the end all solution for them. Honestly, I've done this very thing with my 82 year old mother who needed a way to keep track of What was going on and her need set was not only the amount of information she was keeping track of, but also keeping track of it over time and being able to go back and reference. Her concern was being able to remember things. And this is the type of tool, not just bullet journaling. But in this specific case, that lends itself to that kind of capture, and process and report methodology of being able to pull stuff back when you need it. Without panicking of Where did I put it? Where did it go? How do I find that information out?

Raymond Sidney-Smith 7:34

Great. So what I'd like to do is just very quickly for our listeners, give us a just very, very brief overview of how you would set up the bullet journal system in an analogue environment that is opened up a notebook and then create a bullet journal method. Now we covered this in a prior episode. I'll put a link to that in the show notes. And but I do Just one, I want people to get kind of a sense of just the very basics of this art. Do you want to? Do you want to try and tackle that? You know, I can get started and then continue. What do you want to do?

Art Gelwicks 8:11

Why don't you start because I have a feeling yours will be closer to the actual Ryder Carol one because I use a very highly customized implementation of it my own Sure, absolutely.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 8:22

So when when we when we come to the idea of the bullet journal itself, you need an essence, notebook, pen and paper. And so the notebook should obviously have pages in it. And the whole goal behind it is to identify what he calls vital is it vital and it gives kind of a flowchart to this effect. And if it's vital, then you keep it and that gets tracked in the bullet journal. If it's not vital, then it ultimately gets another set of questions. Does it matter? And I mean, another set of questions, it gets another question and the That question is Does it matter? Yes. And then again, that also goes into the bullet journal. If it's no, then it goes into the trash. And so

the idea here is that you then create a series of, of notes that, that are tracked within the pages of this notebook. So the the notebook itself is identified with several different key kind of sections, the index, and in the index, as Carol puts it is used to locate your content. And you have your topics and page numbers, to jump to think of it as a table of contents for the device, and you have the future log, the future log are those things that are future tasks and events that are not this month. So everything beyond this month gets put into the future log of the monthly log. The monthly log then provides an overview of both event and tasks for the current month this month, and it also functions as a kind of journal for you in some way, shape or form for the month, so it's gonna be what he calls a monthly mental inventory. And then finally, we have the daily log. And the daily log serves as kind of the inbox in the GTD methodologies. lingo. But it's your inbox for capturing your thoughts throughout the day, which then ultimately get clarified and organized in the bullet journal itself. And he calls this rapid logging and rapid logging uses a symbology a set of symbols to their, you know, signify sorry, yeah, he uses signifiers, in essence, to basically annotate to annotate the various thoughts you're capturing within your daily log. So as rapid logging is the idea of capturing these things down and quickly then annotating them or signifying them with the item that they are. So something can be a note, which is a dash a zero or an 0 before it. is a is a small circle as an event a. is a task, hence the bullet journal, the, then you can x that dot out and that's a task that's been completed, you can then create a greater than sign, that's a task that's migrated, it's happening in the future, it's getting pushed forward. And then a less than sign out of the dot becomes a task that is scheduled, when that has moved into your, into your, into your, you know, event based space. And there are there are other kinds of things that are a part of it, but really, those are the, those are the very basics that you need to know in order to, in essence, start rapid logging. And in essence, you will, you know, create your index create your daily log, and then you number the page and you can just start bullet journaling right from there. That did I did I capture all the essence essential pieces Art what what parts did I miss?

Art Gelwicks 11:52

No, I think you hit them all. I think one of the side effects of trying to describe it verbally though is it sounds far more complex than it Actually winds up being an implementation. bullet journaling is one of those things that truly a picture's worth 1000 words it's, it's not as complicated as 14 sections and two notebooks and things like that. The process starts to flow together very quickly once you see it all down on paper. So

Raymond Sidney-Smith 12:18

and and the good part is that for our listeners, I have put links to some tutorials and videos all about this in the show notes. So please go check them out. I've embedded the videos in the episode page. So

you should be able to watch a couple of minutes worth of the video and as art said, You will then very quickly understand what we're talking about here and get up to speed. And so this brings us then to really the crux of our conversation today, which is how do we manifest this in and outside of the bullet journal proper. That is, I am a GTD ear, and I have always thought wow, this bullet journal method this boo Jo concept is a global worldwide. Wide phenomenon, this has got to be something that I can adapt and adopt in my own system, and then crash and burn, crash and burn and crash and burn, I realized that it's a little bit more difficult to take something that is an analog system and more fit into what I've already created in my own world, which is a very hyper digital environment, a platform ecosystem. And so I wanted to hear from you all, how just like, you know, Id ating here how you would take this boo Joe concept and use it in your own world, whether that be also a paper based system, or an analog system, or whether it be in digital and I have my own thoughts, but I'm, I'm curious to point it out there. Oh, Cousteau. Do you want to start with kind of how you would use boo Jo in your own world and then we'll go to art and then I'll, I'll take it home.

Art Gelwicks 13:55

I will. I will start with that and I will start saying that. You know, obviously when you guys talk about paper I have been running from paper for many years and I need some weird thing because he said it's a love hate relationship there is something I really like about paper and I have tried to buy from the cheap paper to the really expensive one and trying to make it work that way but the problem is one my handwriting It's awful. I know I'm not interested in improve it and two I can index stuff so as the paper start coming I you know start growing and growing I can find stuff that is really really frustrating for me. So that's where the the system for paper didn't work. So I on the iPad. There is an application called goodnotes that it even has a basic understanding of what the Bujo is what the bullet journal method is, and allows me to use the Apple Pencil so can do my awfully handwriting but also do the indexing before that I used to get them and then scan them and put them into Evernote. Mostly because Evernote will do a decent or a pretty good OCR optical character recognition and then allows me to look back but there, but he was never that quick. So that never allows me to make it into my system. That said, there is a lot of things that I don't use out of the out of this out of the bullet journal, I don't bring my calendar to paper by calendar isn't digital and will stay in digital. I don't bring my list of tasks they lived on on OmniFocus. And I'm not willing to copy back and forward, I may be able to do you know a focus list. Hey, today, I really need to get these three things and I'm behind and I'm stressed out and these are the only three things I'm going to look and I'm not opening mean OmniFocus that I have done multiple times, but where I have found an incredible amount of power our checklists and notes, I, you know, when I sit in meetings and I'm taking notes of notes of notes of notes, it is really useful for me to be able to index that

and then know that I can come back that I can look into my index and even that I can sort them so that way they are together and I don't need to delete them. And in many cases, I don't even need to process them because I know where I'm going to come back as I'm taking notes, I'm marking the stuff that is important or really even put them directly into the inbox. So in many cases, just having the notes It's enough but but it's good to have it that way. So that's my main use for the Bujo. The other thing I do in there and I really like is thinking, Okay, outlining this stuff, and it is awesome to be able to come back and even see multiple iterations or improvement of certain outlines and certain process. So that said, I have recommend the bullet journal in digital as well as paper to some of my clients when they don't have ever been involved with you know with productivity before you know when I talk to people who has been in the productivity world who understand how to manage a task management who understand how to do with a calendar and projects and tasks and GTD, that that is a different ballgame. But I have continued to you know, I have seen a lot of people do who are struggling with the adulting thing, mostly because they have never seen anything in the productivity. You know, they came late to technology so they they escaped the Franklin Covey planners and escape the beginning of the smartphones and now have a smartphone who do all these mostly because they have been forced to, but they don't have the fundamentals to use all that the on those cases. The bullet journal, it's a fantastic place to introduce people from that one on one on the productivity world. So um, so that's, that's basically my, my main use and I have it in my iPad I have any my iPad Mini, it synchronize on on all of them, but but in my mini, it is perfect because it's the size of a union notebook. So it works really, really well.

For me on I still use a mix of analog and digital for this with the bullet journal because often you'll go into a meeting or discussion and you just have a pen and paper. I mean, you're not carrying your laptop all the time. So at that point, what I do is I'll use just the note taking part of the bullet journal concept to identify thoughts and action items, tasks that have to be addressed things that That get pushed forward. And then I translate those into my digital system. Now, I could translate those into an analog notebook. But as a Augusto mentioned, there's certain things that this system just can't do. It can't do calendar reminders, it can't do task management. Those are types of things that you just need data to work with, rather than just you know, paper and pencil scribbles. So, I translate my system into OneNote. Just because I'm able to duplicate a lot of the core structure that's in bullet journaling inside of OneNote the sections I turned into months, the pages I turned into days, I'm able to take notes and tag action items and and work the system as if it were paper. Now, if I'm using paper and I have gone down this path a couple of times there is another way I found that works really well. There's a system called arc notebooks. levenger also has an ARC from staples. What they are is they're a disk based notebook system, not disk as in

computer, but actually little round disks. And the pages are removable. So you can go in and you can capture notes and information and then put them into various designated sections. I found that this is one of the easy ways to get around the concern of the bullet journal system of having to preset up your structure. A lot of times and I see this quite a bit, people who out no by themselves are really nice journal, which is what I recommend, I mean, if you have to like what you're doing to continue to use it, but then they get into this paralysis. paralysis of this journal is so nice, I don't want to write anything in it or I don't want it to be wrong when I put something in there. And then they wound up hung up on that little discussion point in their head. So to be able to use a system or a structure that allows you to reorganize content pages. That makes it a lot easier to say, oh, okay, this isn't the wrong spot. I'll just move it rather than having to cross things out or redo them. But from the basic mechanism, Yeah, I as much as I love my paper and my pens, this is the kind of thing that's still you hit that ceiling of capability very quick. And I think everyone will find that if they start to make that mental transition into the digital space, they find they have a lot more capability. That also said, there's a huge community of people out there who use OneNote on iPad, to create bullet journals that are basically works of art. They spend huge amounts of time customizing and tuning the visuals and how it lays out and it becomes almost a hobby in and of itself. I always say more power to them. But that's certainly not a price of admission to getting into using the system, analog or digital.

And you hit an important point that it's funny enough. It's been one of the, I believe for many people, one of the biggest obstacles to bullet, journal and ease when you search bullet journal, you find these online Almost piece of art, okay that where people have to spend significant amount of time making it pretty colors, graphics, you know, on the digital as well as the analog world. And when I show you know, their bullet journal to some of the clients and they start researching on their own and then they come and say, Oh, you don't I can do this. Why not? Well, because I'm not artistic, I will never use different colors. And sadly, what you will find online obviously is not you know, the plain, the plane versions, what you find on your research are all these super elaborate thing that I believe for some people it's completely a turn off mostly because it put it out and it seems to send the tool to a different direction. I don't have time to spend into making this pure, pretty and it takes them more time for for the for me to explain that. Forget about the pretty we want useful. We want usefulness but it's really, really Really hard after they have seen those pretty versions to break them from that idea and bring them back to the plane, no color, forget about trying to make drawings and I have seen more clients buying colors on rollers and not getting the tool work for them because what they found online, then they actually use of the tool.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 23:24

I come at the bullet journal a little bit different in the sense that like art I am, yeah, I'm a hybrid. I use both digital and analog devices in my everyday productivity system. And we've talked about this in the past, but I'm a huge fan of the everlast rocket notebooks. They connect it to Evernote, OneDrive, Dropbox, Google Drive and whatnot. And also you can send them directly via email to places so you can in my case, I could send a task directly to my remember the milk in inbox by registered during the email as one of the icons on the everlast system, and this has, of course revolutionized my ability to now capture in an on paper, quote unquote, since I'm writing it in the everlast notebook, and then it automatically being pulled into my digital world for clarifying and organizing. So, from my perspective, now we have the ability to do some really powerful things. So this is how I think about it in essence, with the everlast notebook, and a tool, a web automation tool like IFTTT or Zapier, that can actually look at the file name of the everlast document which everlast has the ability to manifest a specific organization of how you name documents so it can actually scan the first line of the document and OCR that lift the text out and use that as a part of the title, it can place the date and time it can put the the rocket book or the notebook page or things of that nature into the title of the document, which then makes that the file name. And by doing that, then we have a field within Zapier/IFTTT that can then be that can be looked at and filtered for specific things. So now I can say something to the effect of, I could put the word tasks into on the first line of everlast page and or say, let's, let's take this back to the BuJo. So what I can do now is say, index and index and then I can put future log and then I could put monthly log on different pages of the everlast notebook. And what what now can happen is that Zapier/IFTTT can be looking for the those words in the title of the document, and that's what's going to trigger it to actually send it to them. Write notebook within Evernote for me so that I'm able to now have an ongoing backup that one of the one of the things that I tend to have a problem with with the, with with the BuJo system in general is this idea of archiving on a monthly basis. And there's a lot of back and forth with regard to all of that plus I'm a, I'm a backup, you know, fan. And so I want to make sure that my data is being backed up on a regular basis. So I want to be able to just capture and go without concern that my, if I lose my everlast notebook that I don't have some registered backup of it. And this this does it for me in theory. So I can be rapid logging all day long, snap a photograph of of that page, and now it gets sucked into the appropriate place in my digital system for me to be able to look at and reference wherever I might go. And the beauty of that is that I can also open it up in Evernote and then annotate that image so I can create tenure writing in digital on that page, if I so chose the, the The next thing that I I think would be really quite interesting is the idea that if you did do it in just a completely analog space, then then the archival process there's a there's so there's the bullet

journal method itself and and Ryder Carol has since developed the BuJo companion app. So it's an application a mobile application that allows you to be able to scan and archive past notebooks. Again, you know, this is for archiving for purposes of having an a kind of a look back at your journal, so to speak kind of perspective, it's for reflection, it's not really for actionability. And for me, I would really like the idea of being able to go back to these things and to be able to process the interdigital from the paper based system. So this is where I see some some real power here with being able to to snap an image into Evernote, and anything that has a resident action within it, then can be then can be pulled in. I'm also a Livescribe user. And the Livescribe smart pen allows you to be able to digitize digitize text. So I also see the opportunity here for you with your Livescribe notebook and Livescribe pen writing along and then that getting pulled into the Livescribe app, you turn that into text, copy and paste that into your task manager. And so you can be happy and analog and paper based in your you know, in your meetings. And you know, when you go to lunch and come back, go to a conference, you take notes. And then when once you're all done in the clarifying and organizing phase of your of your system, you can now you can now extract that data in live typable text directly from the Livescribe app. So that's something also that I'm really interested in testing and playing with some somewhat because That gives a real power to the system that converts, again that paper static material into digital that then can be moved into that world, especially events. So you say, Oh, you know what I have to go to go to that place at that time and meet so and so well, you can write that into your, into your index and as your rapid logging, but now you can actually surface it and copy it into your calendar.

Art Gelwicks 29:23

See, I think you're hitting on a key point with this too, is that if you adopt the bullet journal system, there are really two main sections to it. There's the point where you're taking notes on a daily basis. And then there's the organizational structure around those notes within the system. Because I, I challenged myself with this same problem looking at it from the analog side. I have a lot of notes that all refer to year over year. So what was you know, how did I do this last year? How do we do it again this year and that kind of thing. And an analog system really doesn't lend itself to that as well. It does in the respect that you can store this stuff. It doesn't mean though, that you have that stuff handy when you need it, because you're just accumulating these books in journals. So what I typically do is I'll go through and I use something like one drive, where I will, when I finish a week, I'll go through and just take digital photos of all the pages for that week. And then use those photos individually and organize them within a one or one note system or within one drive to create that organizational structure around them. Yeah, it would be nice to have the bridge cross that gap of this is what I wrote by hand. And now this is the text version of it. I don't think it's there yet. It is in some respects, but not another's. But at that point,

it's really not as critical because I can still have the information I wrote down by hand and then I can supply some annotation text to go along with it to make sure that it's easy to find the reference. But we still have to look at that basic mechanism that Ryder has always said That you can make this system, whatever you want it to be. The important thing is, is that you use a system to keep organized. And I think this is going all the way back to the beginning. This is that type of thing that you can start small, you can start easy. You could do this for a week, you can say, Okay, I'm just going to take notes for a week using this base structure and organize it for each day and see how it works. And then the next week, do the same thing. And now you have two weeks out of a month, you can start to build an index, when you have time, you know, maybe you're sitting on a conference call, you can put notes into the index at the back of the book. It's something that does not have to be stood up initially. It can grow organically, and you're able to really make it scale to how you work. You just have to keep in mind that there's that upper cap again. So you're always going to wind up having to find additional tools to bolt on to this,

Raymond Sidney-Smith 31:53

I would use it as my vacation productivity system. And I'm and I'm interested to actually try that the next time. I do To go on a longer vacation, because I feel like this is the type of system that can really thrive in that space where there's there's complexity, but it's not the level of complexity in my day to day life. And so it gives me a paper based system where I can I can manifest the BuJo method in in heavy I'm some of you may may know this, but you know, there are those systems where you basically take a, there are those systems where you take a eight and a half by 11 sheet of paper and you fold it twice, so once in half, and then once in half again, the opposite way. And so you get this little tiny kind of notebook. And in essence, you could use you can turn those sheets of paper into, you know, your index future log and so on and so forth. You may not need a monthly log if you're just going on vacation, but but you can you could manifest it right there and a little tiny piece of paper and have that on you and plan and map out your itinerary and you know quickly jot down Flight numbers and all of that stuff kind of in a in a safe space. And then for me, again, I could just capture an image or two sides of a piece of paper, but you know, by unfolding it all, and now it's captured in Evernote for, for archival purposes for backup purposes so that if I lose that piece of paper, I still have what I need from it, I can recreate it, but it gives me the, the safety of being able to say, Okay, well, I'm going to be without internet access, say in the middle of the Sahara, and I hope I'm not in the middle of Sahara, but and then and then you know, and then have this piece of paper that's managing what I needed to. So I feel in these very specific instances being very useful to me, and maybe it might be useful to you.

Art Gelwicks 33:44

You know what, that's a that's a great way to think about it. I hadn't thought about it that way before, but it's one of those things that you could easily stand this up in like 10 minutes. You could pick up one of those little like moleskin cashier notebooks, the little shirt pocket size. Once and get a trip organized in 10-15 minutes and use this structure in that little notebook for your trip. And when you're done, just put that on a shelf, you wind up with a couple of things. One, you're right, you don't have to worry about is your tech working? Do you have connectivity did the battery die, because you have that information there. But second, and this is more of an old man saying this, you wind up with kind of a history of that trip. And that activity, you can take notes of where you've been and addresses the places you visited. And, and maybe you know notations I took a picture of this or I took a picture of that to go back and look for it. That becomes that historical record of that event that you can then go back and reference later on where if you're going through and just taking tasks into a task manager, it's not going to have that same depth of character, for lack of a better term to what that record becomes. And this then we're really talking about becoming more than just a productivity tool. This is more of a true life tool and mindfulness tool and being in the moment and and really starting to appreciate what we're doing without having to fiddle with this thing is not connected this time or it's out of sync yet again,

I love the idea of, of the vacation tool I have never thought about, about getting for a vacation tool. Because mostly, as Ray mentioned, my day to day life tend to be a lot more complicated than what the bullet journal will, will allow me to do. And but but the idea of slowing down period, even if it's not necessarily a whole, you know, long week vacation, but a long weekend where I'm going to go out and I'm instead of, you know, bringing all the technology and all the things I can clean up the system in a Friday week review. So that way I am ready for everything else sounds really really appealing to me.

See, here's the the issue that I'm going to run into after this call. Now I'm going to be all inspired to go back and start doing everything as as much as I can analog again, and I'm going to waste a bunch of times switching gears. We do this to me all the time. Thank you so much. And I think this is one of the problems that I'm hoping that I'm not the only one who has this issue. It has that that new shiny feel, even though it's not new or shiny, but it's something that, hey, maybe I could do something along this angle or do something along that angle. And I have to cognitive, cognitive, I have to think about this and say this is not going to solve all the problems. This is probably not even going to solve half the problem. But is it something that is going to make me happy doing it? And if the answer is yes, then yeah, go ahead, give it a shot. If I can't cohesively say that that's going to be the case, then maybe it's not running net worth running down that path again. That said it does give me an excuse to buy another journal and buy some more pins. So that's always a good thing.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 36:59

So other Other than the vacation model, where you can you can manifest Bujo in and for just specific situations circumstantial spaces that actually came about because I, I have a particular client, and that client means that I can't have my digital devices on me, I have to, you know, they have to stay off site. And so I I'm on site without that digital technology available to me. And so it forced me to have to do that. And so anybody who, for example, if you if you work for the federal government, and you, you know, I spent a lot of time in Washington DC, and, and so, I and my, my GTD DC meetup is, is there and a lot of my GTD members, they they are in that environment where, you know, your your general in, you know, and you have, you can't, you can't access your digital life from, from the computers that are at the office. And so you have to keep these two separate ones. worlds and your personal world may be complex, but it, it can't be in digital. And so or if it isn't digital, it's on your mobile phone and it could just be very, very cumbersome. And so having those two digital worlds can be cumbersome. I think being able to disconnect them and having completely separate worlds or one is in paper and one isn't digital is actually more relieving to a lot of my GTD members, by by manifesting a Bujto like system in in a in a notebook environment. So just give that some consideration, but the other side to this, so other than, you know, not being able to use the technology and so therefore you're forced into a paper based environment. The other side for me was that I come from a planner, day planner kind of system. And so I was a very vibrant and happy you know, day planner. And so I can remember in my my elementary school and junior high school days in New York, with my Trapper Keeper and keeping money daily tasks and everything inside of that, that day planner environment. And as I, as I graduated into, you know, young adulthood, kind of my adolescence and young adulthood, I started journaling. And I, for some reason have always wanted those to be separate from one another. And one of the things I thought about for folks who may not want to disconnect those pieces, but continue to use Bujo, but have them separate is that there are many applications out there. I like the application journey. I know that because to use OneNote, I'm sorry, day one. And so so, you know, journey and day one and many of these other journaling applications allow you to actually take photographs. So you can actually snap a photo of pages of your of your of your bullet journal, and use that as a mechanism for capturing your journaling, and yet might have resident tasks and projects within it, who cares, it has the journal components that you want in it, and therefore that is backed up or archived within the note based system. And then you can journal long form when you want to, but also capture those thoughts throughout the day without having a loss of those from the continuous system that you've created for journaling. So I have considered that as well as a part of, of how some people might manifest the system. And more importantly, what I love about journey is that it actually comes back to me a year later and says, Hey, this

is a this is you have two entries from a year, year ago and two years ago or five years ago. And you should check out these journal entries and reflect upon what you learned. And so if there's an image attached, then I could just pop open the image and there it is the few items that I've written down in my BuJo notebook pages from from yesteryear, in theory, so give that some thought that you can actually facilitate technology Here to use the bullet journal in that regard as well.

Art Gelwicks 41:04

You know, it's interesting you bring up Journey then because I'm, I'm a fan of using Journey too. But I've always struggled a little bit with it with the segue segregation between, you know, just keeping a journal in it and keeping track of all the other stuff. And since you mentioned that I run a Samsung Note8. So I have the stylus. And I was just playing with it as we were talking about this. And one of the things I made it to is I took, I use the Samsung notes and I hand wrote a page of bullet journal style notes on using the stylus. And then I use the share function to send an image of those notes directly to journey. So now I have on my journey page for this time, I have the image of the notes I took. I have the date, the time, the location, I took them, the weather, how I was feeling at the time are those important? Those are all things that could be really useful with a bullet journal structure. That's it. That's an interesting approach. It's a tool But I don't think many people would think about for something like bullet journaling. But it may be a good way to apply it. So yeah, get out of the normal definitions and try some other tools, that it's a great example as to how flexible This concept is. And you can just try it and see if it works. And if it doesn't work, it's not gonna hurt anything or anybody.

It is funny. You mentioned that Trapper Keeper has. My daughter is going fifth grade, But the fact is, the next grade she's going, she's going to experience her first Trapper Keeper and it was really really funny to go on by and I'm, you know, glad some you know, my wife was there with me and did not allow me to buy my own Trapper Keeper and plus the two or \$300 of accessories that we'll have ADD myself too. I think I will have not used but it was really really funny too. Walk into that memory lane and remember Yeah, I like you start with a Trapper Keeper. And from there I found that at the time the Franklin Covey stores made a better Trapper Keeper because instead of being letter size a eight and a half by 11, they made it a junior size that he was much better to take notes and I still believe that the junior size is better for portability for take notes for everything else. So it was really really fun to to go out with her. And I started looking into all this and start showing her how some of the this things really can be the entrance on the portal to to the productivity world and to what I do if you have never been involved with the Bujo, the bullet journal, and you start researching. Remember, you don't need to have any artists actually. Carroll is one of the ones who said I'm not

artistic at all. Mine is black and white. Okay, so don't go into when you start looking at those images thinking, Oh, this is not for me because I will never be, I will never have the time or the interest to make this such an elaborate system. That's really really, really important, I believe, because it's one of the biggest obstacles I have found for people getting into this. So if you look at that, and you say, Oh, I will never be able to be this, or do it this way, take into consideration that the bullet journal do not require any of that. So that's really I think it's really important for our listeners to leave that on.

I have to echo Augusto, his thoughts on the idea of you know, you don't have to be an artist. Don't be scared of what you find on the Internet and on Facebook and on Pinterest related to bullet journaling. started its most basic. read one of the old posts that are out there, you don't have to look at the most latest version of it. And just give it a Start and see if it feels comfortable, it's going to take some tweaking, it's going to take some modification, but it's one of those things that has probably the lowest cost of ownership to get in, and the shortest learning curve of any of the systems out there. So it's one of those things, give it a try. If it doesn't work, you haven't sacrificed a lot to find that out.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 45:17

And I would be remiss if I didn't mention to our listeners that this is actually a book. Now that writer has published the bullet journal method. And so there's a link to that in the show notes. So you can hop out and see the book and read it where he goes into quite a good bit of depth. around it. There's an audio book version, which also has a supplemental PDF that you can download when when you buy the the audiobook version. And that's a very useful little supplemental PDF that you can review and see things worked out and he has some Venn diagrams, kind of showing the bullet journal method, which I think the visuals can be very helpful and kind of rapid. In your head around his ideas of intentionality. He actually also did a TEDx talk on intentionality. And I'll embed that also in and link to that in the in the show notes as well. Well, thank you, gentlemen, for this really great conversation around the bullet journal method. And as an extension to our prior episode, like I said, I'll put a link to the prior episode in the show notes. But if you have a question about the bullet journal method, or you have a comment about this episode about tailoring the bullet journal method to your needs, feel free to head over to the podcast website if you're not already there. And we invite you to comment, leave a comment or question right there at the bottom of the of the page. And you can you can let us know and one of us will be glad to respond. There also on ProductivityCast dotnet. You will find the show notes from the episode which includes links to anything we discussed. It'll we have a transcript of the episode so you can jump to points and kind of identify where particular conference sessions were happening, or parts of the conversations were happening,

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Voiceover Artist 48:02

And that's it for this ProductivityCast, the weekly show about all things productivity, with your hosts, Ray Sidney-Smith and Augusto Pinaud with Francis Wade and Art Gelwicks.