

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 0:16

Welcome back everybody to ProductivityCast the weekly show about all things personal productivity. I'm Ray Sidney-Smith

Augusto Pinaud 0:22

I'm Augusto Pinaud

Francis Wade 0:23

I'm Francis Wade.

Art Gelwicks 0:24

I'm Art Gelwicks.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 0:27

Welcome, gentlemen, and welcome to our listeners. Today, we are going to be talking about Francis's second edition of his book. Basically, we're going to talk a little bit about the ability for us to be able to do something that I think is really interesting related to Francis's book, perfect time based productivity. So Francis, do you want to tell us a little bit about your book, first of all, and then give us a bit of a preamble in terms of what we were discussing today on this cast?

Francis Wade 0:54

Sure. So one of the core ideas which I've sort of run into, by mistake. I always thought there was a perfect kind of big set of behaviors out there then, and you just needed to learn them from somebody who's really smart. And that was my original thought. But I discovered that through the through leading courses that people already came into the programs with habits and practices, they're already using tools, they already have something in place. So I did a little bit of digging to the research and found out that they actually develop these behaviors, starting from adolescence, and going all the way into early adulthood. Specifically, I'm talking about task management behaviors. So they start to make tasks in their mind. It's a psychological process. Some people transition into making lists, some sat use paper, some migrate from using memory. But anyway, by the time they hit 25, let's say and they walk into a time management program or they pick up a book, these behaviors are already in place, and the research supports it to a great degree, but the training that we offer on a hole doesn't support on a whole. The training we offer says, here's something you don't know anything about. But what really happens, from my opinion is that the learner sits there reading or

listening and says, Hey, I'm already doing half of this stuff. So in their mind, they're having to say, Oh, hold on a minute, they're going through a self evaluation, but it's not like they're learning advanced trigonometry, which they don't have any clue about. They're learning about task management, which is something they've done ever since they first heard the concept of time, which is about 10 years old. So we don't give up. We don't tell them this. Usually, they have to discover it on their own, but they're sort of left sitting in your courses on or training wondering, Hmm, I already do that. So they're doing their own ad hoc self evaluation. My book says, essentially, instead of doing an ad hoc self evaluation, let me teach you how to do one on your own without my being there at all. So just follow this process and you'll be doing self evaluation. But let me stop there and validate that idea of doing a self evaluation that people do that with you guys before I go on to the next piece,

Augusto Pinaud 3:09

I agree to a certain extent that, and even I don't know if 25 is even the age where we're where those problems start, you know, when you look at, you know, in the United States, specifically, how certain basic things or has been eliminated from the curriculum, okay, that you have people who go to college who don't know the most basic stuff, forget about complex stuff as time management, we're talking about the basics to fix anything, you know, I, you can see, you know, see friendzone customers who unclimbed quote unquote, coaching clients who are now struggle with their kids going to college that don't know the most basic things, you know, and they're wondering if they should have teach them and how they learn it and say, Well, I learned Some of that is school, I learned some of that. And the basic skills are not there. And they're coming to that 25. And there is really not an easy place to find where and how to learn those basic skills.

Francis Wade 4:12

For example, I've met CEOs who still try to manage all their tasks using memory and it's not as if they aren't smart people, they usually really smart, at least book smart and business smart. But the idea the basic idea that we you know before or subscribe to, which is that memory is a bad place to keep your tasks. It's something that they've never heard they literally don't know any better. So to back up what Augusta saying people fumble stumble all the way into their 20s or even beyond. And they don't even know that they're fumble stumbling. They're just, they just made something up and they're trying to make it work as hard as they can. As one woman put it to me and of course, she had she saw that she needed to manage all her costs in her memory because that was a sign of being productive. writing anything down was like a sign of weakness. Well, by the end of the course she, you know, she got the opposite opposite story. But to back up what Agustina saying you know that the software doesn't help you understand that that we in a previous episode, we talked about the apps that are on your phone, they don't give a hint that you should be managing tasks,

the way they used to back when we were picking up the first PDAs. So there's nothing in their environment that is saying, nudging you in the right direction, you're on your own.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 5:28

So my only curiosity is that, as I think about my own experience in learning, time management and task management together, they really were a combined experience. I can't parse apart, having learned one separately from the other. As a as an adolescent. The whole notion of managing to be more efficient and effective, even though I didn't have those terms, was something that was very appealing to me. And so I imagined that there are people out there Who naturally gravitate toward order? And there are people who probably don't. And you're listening to us, if you probably gravitate toward order, or you recognize that you gravitate toward maybe chaos, and you know that you need that order. So we all share an experience where we're in. We're consistently focused on that. And our development led us to that point, whether either way, right. So the goal for us is to figure out from adolescence to adulthood and it's pretty interesting that you talk about the kind of around the age of 25, because our brains develop our bodies develop actually, up until that point until the age of 24 ish, people are still developing. And so the the maturation of the human of you know, human development is very slow and 24 years before Human is fully developed as a pretty, you know, long time, a period of time. And so I just think that at each stage of education, we're somewhat failing our, all of civilization if we're not teaching them the right time management and the right task management and the right goal management, whether that be projects or otherwise, at the at the stage in which they are at. And so I'd be curious, like in going back to my adolescence, again, you know, in essence, they would just hand you your assignment and go and say, go home and do this assignment. And so you had a had a series of worksheets or a series of books that you took home and each of those represented a few of those things. Maybe a teacher would sent home, a list of assignments, and I know I didn't get that but I know that there there are teachers who do that. And then we get up into, you know, upper primary schools. Secondary School, you know, and in those environments, then you get more and more responsibility to manage those things. And so, Francis, from my perspective, what do you think is the difference between the way in which we educate kids kind of, you know, as a whole, because obviously, all of us have had different educational experiences, you know, but the, but does that impact the way in which the adult then comes out on the other side, say after post secondary school, and how they approach wanting to learn about productivity, and therefore, their, their terminal success in achieving some level of a productivity system that works for them.

Francis Wade 8:43

I've seen a little bit of training offered here and there to the high school level. It's totally ad hoc. It's not very modern. It's

anecdotal. It's nothing I could hang our hat on. What I can, what I can see with a little bit of certainty is That those those students who are more diligent, those who are more nerdy, perhaps sometimes get people like us are more likely to gravitate towards productivity tools. But I think it's because they just take on a series of demands on their time, like the kid who, you know, the kid who is world class ice skater at age 14, or world class gymnasts is, is going to have a particular kind of life that is full of full of demands on her his or her time. And they've got to rather have someone in their life who is telling them what to do, which works up to a particular point, but many of them from what I can understand from what I've read of their biographies, many of them push themselves and they become world class because they push themselves and the pushing causes them to add more than 168 hours of tasks of of tasks per week. So in other words, they're having they're pushing themselves to have to not use a memory And are they taught not to do that? I could find no evidence that even the gymnasts, the world class athletes, who have to do this, at a young age are taught how to do it. I don't see a hope there is, but I haven't found any evidence myself. I think it's still left up to them, and it's left up to chance. And if they're lucky, they develop the skills on their own, and they're not so lucky. Someone manages them, if they're terribly unlucky, they end up failing. And I think that's just the brutal truth of it.

Art Gelwicks 10:29

Well, I think for I mean, using the athlete analogy here, I think a lot of that is imposed on them the structure is provided by coaches and by other people who are trying to guide them along that because there is kind of a proven path in many cases as to doing these things. You will get better at such and such a thing with outside something like an organized sport that I think you're absolutely right. This is where people are where, and I hate to use the term kids But young adults are kind of left by the wayside on this. And they suffer for that not only through high school but also through their sec through college. And as soon as they get into the workplace and remain in the workplace, often these are skills that are never developed. It's a constant effort to try but that window of opportunity to turn, what would be an incremental skill into a permanent habit has been missed. I think in a lot of cases.

Francis Wade 11:28

Yeah, there's some some evidence interesting evidence of that, that you guys watched them. Last Chance u on Netflix.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 11:35

Now, what's that? It's a

Francis Wade 11:37

it's been around for four seasons. No, but what they do is they they've been to two junior colleges and they track the students

through the course of one season students playing on a football team. So that these these because of the nature of junior college football, they tend to be dropouts from from four year colleges, who ran into some academic trouble or legal trouble. Or whatever trouble they ran into, but they got caught. And they're their last chance is to join one of these junior college teams, and therefore get back into college level of football. So these are extremely talented football players. They're all in the age range of 1920 2122 that read, so they and they're taking a full course load. And of course, they're playing football. And their schedules are as you can imagine, ridiculous. So they're, they're beyond the age of the gymnast who has everyone telling them what to do. You know, there's 6070 guys on our roster, I get 80 guys, and they're left to their own devices for the most part, except for the times when you need to spend training. So what you see happening is that teachers and guidance counselor's running after these 20 year olds to turn to study. I mean literally going into their dorm or setting office hours and going through every class over and over again, because these guys don't have the skills that we're talking about. Schedule your own time. Some do. Some make it. But for the most part, you know what the odds are at this point, the odds are that these guys are one in 100 that make the NFL and by and large, they're left, usually not graduating not managing their time well, it impacts their performance on the field, they become ineligible. So anyway, it's a great series, I recommend it highly, but you know, be prepared to watch it, then a wince because you're seeing these kids essentially go down a path that they're not going to succeed on. It's really sort of heartbreaking.

Art Gelwicks 13:31

My daughter was a college soccer player for a number of years. And one of the things they did as part of the requirement of the soccer team is they had scheduled study time, the team, you had to put in five hours of dedicated study time each week if you were going to be on the team football had the same thing and it varies from school to school. That was their answer to making sure that the student athletes put aside time for their studies. Here's the problem. That's just an open block of time. Nowhere in that, is it reinforcing the skills that are necessary to use that time effectively. Now the argument can be made that at the college level, they should have those skills. Okay, let's back it up then in high school, are those skills being developed? Well, yes and no. They're developing skill sets to help them meet the specific requirements of the academic environment, but not life in general. And where I can't really fault anybody. It's just this self fulfilling prophecy, prophecy because most of the people, teachers specifically, who have to try and teach these students these kinds of skills, were never taught those skills in the first place. And it's not part of their curriculum. They're tasked to teach a curriculum and deliver it and make sure that the students understand and comprehend nowhere in that curriculum unless a school has specifically dedicated a class to study And good habits skills, which is almost unheard of.

It's it's a secondary thing. And I think I look at it from the corporate world, where I'm looking at people who, you know, they have MBAs, some have doctorates, incredibly smart people who cannot manage day to day tasks, who cannot deliver things on time, who cannot estimate the amount of work necessary to complete a particular effort. And those are just basic mechanical things that you need, whether it's at work or at home. And I'm just, I'm really, I don't want to say disheartened, but this is a continuing thing. This is not getting any better. So the question I have is, how does it get better? How do we start to change the direction of this boat,

Francis Wade 15:48

I can jump in there because it's a good point to transition to the solution set, because the, the, uh, if you've ever heard of the NFL combine you guys were The test that they go through the would be draft picks. So they go through, I watched a couple of shows on this. They grow through the most rigorous evaluation of their skills in multiple dimensions. Maybe I think, I don't know the number, maybe 1020 different attributes, how fast they are, how well they catch while on the run, how well they depending on the position, and they test them in all these finite minute capable areas or capability. And what comes out at the end is a report that either highlights there, it highlights their weaknesses, but it also signals that this person is a great potential pick for the NFL, so it's a huge opportunity to evaluate. Now that evaluation is not done by the individual. It's done by the combine, but the effect is the same, which is that some people come on to the combine and realize that they're too weak. For example, They're sprinting. So for the next year, they go work on their sprinting, and then they come back and they're sprinting is better and then they get into the NFL. But the point is that the the evaluation that's done of at the NFL combine is extremely sophisticated. So compare that against the evaluation that art this thing is totally missing, which is we don't have a way as a society to help working people do any kind of event there's nothing like the NFL combat, there is nothing other than you know, the little 10 point test that you know, you might do to find otter my this type, that type or the other type. There's nothing rigorous around the productivity skills that all of us use, that approaches anything like the NFL combat and that's, that's that's why I thought we should we would we could get to today, which is what's what would an evaluation tool and NFL combine for the individual? What would that look like if we could take anyone who is 20 Who says, oh, let me read a productivity book or let me get interested in being more productive or let me get married and oh, my goodness, I just had triplets. And I have a new job and no, I have a hole. So no, I'm getting overwhelmed. How do we help someone to evaluate their skills and therefore decide which one to work on next, because that's, that's the funnel that everybody art described goes through and the point that many not everybody but everyone most people get to at some point, they asked, How can I do this better, and they don't have anything to work

Raymond Sidney-Smith 18:31

with. I would start with a step back from maybe some of the more practical components. And not to say that this isn't practical, but I would really look at the work of Dr. Howard Gardner. He's a longtime professor at University of Pennsylvania, I believe it is, and his research on this on the identification of multiple intelligences. And what I really, you know, when I think of productivity Think about how multi dimensional it is. and frequently what we do is we try to give behavioral interventions that is tell people to do certain things that are counter to the way in which they already operate. And so it ends up being a square peg in a round hole. And we just try to jam as many people into that combination as possible. And it ultimately means that they're going up a, you know, walking uphill, and the uphill battle has a tendency to fail for them. And so Dr. Gardner categorizes intelligence into six different categories. Today we have the popular psychology that talks about, you know, your normal IQ, and then you know, emotional intelligence and social intelligence from Dr. Daniel Goldman's work and and not his work, but his his really proliferating of the message of that work. But Dr. Gardner discusses six different types of intelligence So he talks about visual, spatial, linguistic, verbal, interpersonal intrapersonal, which is where maybe emotional and social intelligence fits logical mathematical, musical, a kinesthetic or bodily intelligence, and then naturalistic intelligence, being able to be in touch with nature and be out there and kind of the outdoors eat stuff. And so I would start with that, like figure out what and where people have natural inclinations toward things. And that will give us the skills that they are most naturally attuned to have. And those development of those skills in line with their time team tasks and project management then becomes easier.

Francis Wade 20:43

What if there's a like a task management intelligence, that seems to me like a orthogonal to the ones you mentioned, but it's its own intelligence, maybe

Art Gelwicks 20:53

I worry about the terminology we're using, because we've already gone really deep on some heavy Psychological terminology. And we know that's what scares people off. A lot of times, I'm just concerned that we haven't started at a high enough level to get somebody into this. I mean, if, if we were talking about, you know, the NFL combine that you're not going to start with, what's the person's vertical jump height? I mean, there's been, that's a nice thing. But if he's an offensive lineman, his vertical jump height is really kind of irrelevant. But it's a factor. Can we start this at a higher level?

Raymond Sidney-Smith 21:27

I'm not gonna go into a diatribe with a middle schooler or a high schooler on multiple intelligences, but it might be helpful to have

some kind of assessment to be able to figure out the quotient of their specific intelligence. And that means that we not only need to sort people through that assessment, and then we can start to figure out what the right mechanism for being able to help them is. I don't think it's about getting too esoteric. Yeah,

Art Gelwicks 21:57

but we keep throwing out the word until And I'm challenged to think that productivity and intelligence have a direct correlation. And I don't think they do.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 22:06

And I'm not saying that we I'm not saying that we stay in intelligence. I'm just saying that we start there.

Unknown Speaker 22:12

Okay. Yeah, I can, I'll buy that.

Francis Wade 22:15

I'm looking at the page here@infrared.org. I'll put this link in the show notes, but it talks about different intelligences. And it's pretty, it's pretty interesting. And thinking, Okay, I could see where different ones apply to different people. But if there if there is a such thing as task task intelligence, then I would argue that it applies to every one applies to everyone. Because everyone creates tasks in every area of their endeavors. And they struggle to they have to find a way they have to create a way for themselves to manage tasks that they can't complete immediately. So every every human being who is every adult of who is functional, has that channels challenge. And some do it some do it better than others. So it strikes me as its own kind of area, which is what kind of what my book was not reading this description. My book was really about task. Task intelligence, let's call it that. And because we arrive at our own solutions, pretty much for the most part, and, and lack lack basic guidance, we end up creating something that is kind of kind of works sometimes when we're younger. But then when we get older, we run into problems because the number of tasks gets to be too high. And then we need to climb this ladder to a higher level of capability, but we don't have the wherewithal to do it on our own. That's the that's the sort of frame the challenge in terms of an intelligence

Raymond Sidney-Smith 23:50

that's maybe what I'm getting from what I'm reading here a from my perspective, if we look at this from all of the base level components of a human right and and intelligence is just One of them, I'm just saying, and my argument here is that I think we look at intelligence as being a very narrow band of the logical, rational brain. And we test people based on that. And there's a lot of biases built into that. If we look at it from a more holistic perspective, there are components about the emotional landscape of the of the individual, for



example, I was a very emotional, young person, and just very emotional, and, and for whatever reason, and and, and so I grew out of that. But if if there was a way to understand that about a child at that age, then there may have been better interventions for me to be able to deal with those kinds of things in many different arenas, but then we can translate that forward to thinking about Okay, well, not just intelligence as being a component, but we can look at the way in which a child experiences the world in different different value systems, right. So they have Values about their favorite color or the, you know, other kinds of sensory experience. So, if they have if we can teach them across all of those intelligences, even if they may have a specific one that they're talented in, but then say, Okay, well, what's their sensory experience? What's their seasonal experience? That is, we have typically four seasons on the planet in in our various hemispheres. And it teaching just seasons to kids, gives them an understanding of the progression of time, and being able to start to understand what you call time demands in your book, Francis, on a on a more macro level, and gives them the ability to start chunking down into saying, Okay, well, typically, you know, if I start school in the fall, then these things happen in a concentrated space in the fall. And now we get a better understanding of the child and how they manage on these kinds of macro levels. You know time chunking and then working our way down

Augusto Pinaud 26:03

there is a another study that I want to bring to I bring this study many times that is a Carol Dweck work on fixed as well as grow mindset and I think is relevant to all these because as we all agree on the different kind of intelligence, I think also apply not only to that intelligence, but maybe even as a precursor, what kind of mindset Do you have regarding this stuff? You know, if you think well, this is what I have, you know, and this is all that I have, and there is nothing I can do about it. That is my definition of the fixed mindset or no, I can learn and improve on any or almost any skill that I have over time. That is the premise of the grow mindset. And I think it's really relevant to this because doesn't if you are not able to see those things, then you are not able to identify the kind of intelligence You know, when Francis was early saying, or friends or Arden was talking about the CEO who's using the memory? Well, that goes to that many I, I have worked with clients and when you tell them Okay, let's do you know, let's just stop using the mind and let's stop, you know, start creating a system. They look at you and say, I don't need a cyst I when you look at them and say what do you mean, you don't need a system? They told you, I've been doing this like this for 30 years. I understand but you're struggling well, doesn't matter. I need to do it the way I've been doing it for 30 years. And I think those people are not even able to get to the more deep discussion about the kind of intelligence they are even stuck to step early on the kind of mindset in which they use to approach life. And that is a really big, big problem.

Art Gelwicks 27:44

Now do you think that they are saying they don't need a system because they honestly believe that fact or inside they're saying to themselves that I don't know where to start on a new system so I feel safer sticking with the one that I've been using

Augusto Pinaud 28:01

there is both Actually I have people who have exactly what you described that fear of, Okay, what if or I don't have the time or I don't have the bandwidth and therefore I should not do okay there is that but there is also a big percentage of people especially under difference goes into where are you into that fix or grow mindset if you are a fixed mindset, it's not about fear, it's not you don't think you need it, okay. You have done it and this is what you have because you can improve Okay, the fear its existence on people who believe can change but they don't know where to start. But he goes back to to, to that Where Where are you? You know, if I ask the four of us, if you have a fixed regrow mindset, I will get 100% response, okay. But I work with clients who the first work even before we go into try to improve or do anything is to get them to see that they are acting on a fixed mindset and they need to change it. Because before that there is no opportunity to improve will happen. Doesn't matter if you have 25, or you have 40 SSL or 60 as a CEO, it's exactly the same. This is the way we have done it. This is the way we have done it for years. And there is no other way it can be done.

Francis Wade 29:17

Yeah, I agree completely. I've run into I've run into both types as well. But once you get past the, the conversion from a fixed to a growth mindset, the the tools still seem lacking. I think this is somewhat true for any intelligence. I think, a long time ago, it used to be the case that you give someone a coach and the courts will tell you, here's what I need to do, or here's what you need to do. And I think that's evolved over time to where we have, I would call it remote coaching where you don't have to be there with the person, you know, right in front of them to tell him what to do. The learner is motivated enough to be able to follow your path and I think it's ultimately going to get to the point where where some coaches want to get away As you eliminate the quarter together, and the person self quarters, and that's the question I'm asking with respect to what I'd said, what I said in the beginning was, would be this kind of automation or self evaluation. If someone wants to self coach and wants to start with a self evaluation, I think this is true of task management. But I think it's true of everything, including football, for that matter. what's the what's the method of giving someone the ability to evaluate their own skill so that they can then improve assuming of course, the growth mindset.

Augusto Pinaud 30:34

If we assume that grow mindset, the first part I it's possible to self coach, hey, we have four examples in here. Okay. We have been working into productivity with and without coaches for many, many years. We have, in a way self coach ourselves to that process. That's great, but the first is understand that where you are going and how things have changed, I agree with the recent there is a significant Change and technology has created this massive change on a speed that for most people, you know, it's not even acceptable. Jeff, do you think about it? If you look on the technological evolution of the phone, okay, there from 2008 or 2006 to 2009 K, that's 13 years. Okay. And the phone as we understood we were the first generation who use phones, okay? I, I remember when the first Motorola came out, okay, same as you guys, even if you guys deny it, okay, but that was a tool. And it was a tool that could do one thing, okay. Kids now are coming out of jungler generations are coming, okay, with a tool that can do more than what my first computer could do. Forget about the first laptop, the first next okay and with that has changed. Everything has changed what the work, what the kind of work, how do you approach the work what you require Aren't for Wilkie, think about it in a management level, Okay, forget about the CEO go three or four levels down to the general manager what that General Manager do today, it's really different to what a general manager did 10 years ago 10 years ago, he this person job was to manage the work today, this person needs to manage the work plus do some work plus more. So, unless you have a clear understanding of all those elements, you are in trouble. Not only that, the boundaries used to be significantly clear, hey, you do a B and C and then after that, you pass it to Person B, who will do the E and F and then you pass it to the next. Now, you may do a and c but in order to do c you need to wait for the next person to do B. Okay. And I understand sounds complicated. It is complicated. Okay, um, some of those steps take seconds. The problem is not everybody has seen The Evolution Okay, look at this. Okay. It was not so long ago that what we are doing right now. Okay was a massive technology challenge. Okay, we are recording a podcast from for location every week. Okay, it sounds possible okay. But 20 years ago Doug was not even something that we could put in the dream evolution of the technology has come at such a level of speed that I think for most people has just passed them through that is in part what bring the problem you were mentioning at the beginning, Francis, okay. And it's not necessarily a problem on where are those tools? The problem is the evolution of these tools has come so fast that people not necessarily are aware where to start or even if the tool exist.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 33:48

So what what will we do beyond just kind of recognizing the context of what needs to happen that is, what I'm hearing is some level of assessment needs to be done. And then once that assessment is done, then we need to do something beyond that. What's the beyond that for helping someone Understand?

Art Gelwicks 34:10

I mean, if we can go through, if we can go through and help people think about what they're strong at accomplishing, and what they're weak at accomplishing at the highest generic level, sans tool, move away from the tech aspect of it. And just, if you're going to do it with pen and post it note, you know, what, what are you really good at and where your weaknesses are, and then define around strengthening those weaknesses that I think goes a huge step in helping people start to develop that frame. I mean, at its most basic, I start these conversations with a question, what's your success criteria when you finish this thing? How do you know you were successful? Now usually, that's on larger things, but that can be something as simple as taking out the trash. How do you know you were successful? The trash is at the curb. It sounds mundane, but it's defining the accomplishment. The execution, the steps and the initial starting place. And that's where that's where we can help people start to understand this. For instance, you were talking earlier about how to quantify this thing. And all I can think about is, every book in the self help productivity section at the bookstore, has this exact same little skinny chapter at the beginning, talking about knowing what you need to do, and the entire rest of the book is trying to sell you a process on how to accomplish that. I think that needs to be reversed. Ooh,

Francis Wade 35:33

that's, that's juicy. I, I, you know, I actually have a live example of what we're talking about, which I just realized, as we were talking, I didn't even I don't even know this is what was happening. But I'm a cyclist, as you guys probably know, but our listeners may not know, but I read two or three times a week and I write to the group and the club raids Are you know, they're pretty good, but the problem with the club right is that you You kind of go for a ride, you don't know what's gonna happen when you, you know where you're going, how long it's gonna take, but the club rides pretty much ticket to a particular level of skill and stamina and speed, and then they don't take you any further. So you, you get as good as everyone else, but you don't get any better. This is the so you kind of hit a plateau. In other words, and the plateau is the average of the club and everyone writes together. So you're going at the same speed every week. But recently, about three months ago, I came across swift and Swift is a online game technology. They call it an esport, where you hook up your, your bicycle to a trainer, the trainer has bluetooth built in, IT projects your speed onto a, onto a real race with other people on a screen. So you're riding against other people all around the world, lots of Japanese for some reason, but you're actually writing these races against these other people. You're on you're you're physically exerting you're on your back. It has resistance, it's picking up your resistance. And it's you're riding in a pack with people from all over the world. So it's interesting, right? But the but the key part is that it teaches you how to train yourself. And for the first time since I've started writing, it gave me a evaluation of my strength as

a writer. It's called a functional threshold power. FTP doesn't mean anything to most people, but it's Oh, it's measured in watts. And I had never done anything like this before and I know exactly what mine is. And the program helps you to pick races and rides that allow you to improve your strength, stamina and all the rest of it. Because it's particularly your no for the first time ever in my life. I know riding according to my FTP or according to my capability, and I'm doing special rides are designed to boost my capability, boost my FTP and I'm getting into this. I've gotten into For the last three months or so, I've gotten into this virtuous cycle of writing, improving, measuring, writing, improving, measuring all of it happening in real time inside of this app. And so so what's happening on the road now in my club is a couple of guys saying to me, you're like an animal, because Sure enough, it's working. I mean, this thing didn't even exist was even on my radar three months ago, I didn't know of its existence until a friend told me but my doing it has allowed me to become a better writer in a very short space of time that I never thought was possible. And I'm fitter know that I've ever been I'm faster than I've ever been. And siana to say that there's some design element in there, through the middle what artists sing, the people who write self help books are trying to design a way for you to get better, but there's something about using software and this goes back to what what a Gustaf has been telling us about the that the modern day apps don't have any nudging or she In other words, they're not using the designers aren't using the app to help you to be more productive. In their design, there's been a loss of direction, a loss of fidelity, a loss of purpose, let's call it that that, for example, is built into this game that I'm playing this game that I'm playing is all about getting better. Whereas smartphone is not about making you better. It's just about maybe making you more entertained. So I think there's a design element that if you know something about a subject, you've got to take that take that knowledge and then translate it into compelling software, so that the person who's using it can get better faster. I think that's the missing element to the self help books is that they don't have software and software is extremely powerful in helping people to accomplish their objectives. Well, what do you guys think?

Raymond Sidney-Smith 39:53

And we're gonna leave it there and continue this really interesting conversation that we're having about develop upping our personal productivity systems from the ground up. And we'll continue this conversation in the following cast. So I want to thank you, gentlemen, for joining me here on this cast. And just a couple of announcements before we close out. First and foremost, if you have a question or comment about this cast or something that we discussed, if you're listening from anywhere other than the podcast website, we invite you to jump over to that episode. So go to productivity cast dotnet and forward slash Wii U, the episode number is the URL. So if it's productivity cast dotnet forward slash 001, you would go to that

episode, the three digit number. And then at the bottom of the page, you can leave a comment or question one of us will be glad to respond there also on productivity cast dotnet. On the on the episode page, you'll find show notes with links to anything we've discussed. So it's easy to jump to is a transcript available on the page as well as a PDF download of that and you can learn how to follow any of us or all of us. And also subscribe to the to the podcast. If you're not already a subscriber, there's a subscribe page, and it'll take you to your favorite podcast app and lead you to be able to subscribe to us there. If you have another question about personal productivity not related to this topic, perhaps one that you'd like us to discuss on a future episode, please feel free to visit productivity cast dotnet forward slash contact, you can leave a written message or you can record an audio message for us there on the page from your web browser. Very cool. Also, if you can please leave a rating a review in Apple podcasts or Stitcher or whichever podcast app you use that allows you to be able to leave a review. This helps us grow our personal productivity listening community. So thank you for listening. Thank you for your reviews, and we're really glad to have you a part of our personal productivity community. Finally, thanks, Augusto, Francis and Art for joining me here on this cast. Here's to your productive life. Take care everybody.

Voiceover Artist 42:00

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.