

#232 An Extra Piece of Toast

James Kilgarriff

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[00:00:00] **Susan:** today I am delighted to welcome James Kilgarriff to Life Beyond the Numbers. James, you're so welcome

[00:00:08] **James:** Thank you very much, Susan. Thanks for inviting me on the call today. And you've got my surname you said it so well. I guess you're from Ireland, my parents are from the west coast of Ireland, but go on

[00:00:18] **Susan:** No, that's funny. 'cause how do people pronounce your surname

[00:00:21] **James:** some people say Kill Gruff, Killer Gareth. no, it's Killgarriff. no, most people get it right, but you s- you seem to be quite fluent in the way you said it

[00:00:28] **Susan:** Yeah. to me it's very normal looking, like

[00:00:32] **James:** yeah.

[00:00:33] **Susan:** that's the thing. so James, yeah, you said your, you hail from, or your heritage is from the west of Ireland, but that's not how we met. So we met at a course in London, one called Your Life, Your Way, that was run by Michael Neill over several months during 2026.

And, I haven't talked about that course much, and I'd just like to ask you James, what does it mean to you now to live your life your way?

[00:01:09] **James:** what I liked about Michael Neill, as he- he's written a book called The Inside-Out Revolution. i- he's been doing this for many years, teaching for, what, 35, 40 years. What I liked about his approach is there is no fixed way to live or be successful. I- I've read all the books, Think and Grow Rich, How to Win Friends and Influence Pe- all these books that, show you how to live a better life, and some of them are really good, very effective.

But living your life your way means it's your way, it's unique to you. You're an expert on yourself, and I'm still playing with that, and what I liked about what he was saying is, follow your wanting and follow your knowing. What do you know is right for you? What- what is it that you want? Not that you wish,



For example, if I want to have, an extra piece of toast for breakfast this morning, rather than thinking about what it's gonna do to my diet and other people don't do it and it's gonna do this and it's go- I get into my thinking, I want an extra piece of toast. So that's what I got, from that, is to become more mindful and don't beat myself up if I want something. What about you?

[00:02:19] **Susan:** I love that. I think Michael Neill would love that as a recommendation. You can have that extra piece of toast. I suppose one of the things I've gotten from it, James, was looking back and seeing where I did do things my way. for example, I left every job I had without another job to go to. Now, most people would tell you, "That's crazy. Don't do that," blah, blah, blah. But I always knew I was going to be okay. And there wasn't anything predictable about that. That was a, a following my wanting and knowing. I just didn't have the language for it, So it's helped me believe again in that side of myself, I think, which I, funnily enough, when I began to work for myself, I think I abandoned in favor of following all the books telling you how to run your business and what you need to do, and all of those kind of things.

And somewhere I lost the thread of my own wanting and knowing in favor of the general advice that's out there, ... And also, the discernment of knowing what I want, 'cause I think it's can be quite hard.

We're not really ... I don't think I was brought up to get what I want

[00:03:48] **James:** No, and there's something about if I get one I want, I might get punished, I feel guilty, I don't deserve it. So all this story, all this meaning we make in the mind, we get caught up with so much thinking.

This is a big thing that Michael Neal talks about. we get caught up in our heads, and we're trying to, I shouldn't have that, and I shouldn't have this."

And that- that's another thing. we have s- we are filled with shoulds. rather than just saying, "I want that toast." No more story. Or, "I wanna go on a week's vacation to Italy," without h- going through a justification thing. and knowing is coming from r- from... You can call it intuition, your common sense, innate wisdom.

w- for example, o- one of the exercises we had was, tomorrow I think it's gonna rain here in Spain. right now I know it's really sunny and hot. So it's discerning between thinking and knowing because when I think I'm here and when I'm knowing, I'm coming more from, if you can say more from the heart

[00:04:56] **Susan:** Or there's a groundedness to it, isn't there? as opposed to being in the clouds as such.



[00:05:01] **James:** Sure

[00:05:02] **Susan:** in our heads we're often up in the clouds with thoughts just coming and going, like Michael might say, like the weather, and some of them we just hang on to and decide that those are the ones that must be true because maybe they're saying something about us. And so many thoughts just pass on by that we never pay attention to

[00:05:24] **James:** sometimes we get caught up in our thinking because of past pain, trauma, depression, and then those memories or those thoughts can have a lot of an emotional charge around them, so they stay solid in our thinking. And people go to therapy and all the rest of it, but you end up thinking about your thinking when you're in therapy - nothing wrong with therapy, but you just know, knowing that these, these thoughts...

He talks about it as, as habitual thinking. rather than looking for the needle in the haystack, this thought, where's the originating, trauma event that caused me to feel this way? It's just saying, okay, it's, like as you said, it's heavy weather. It's a bit, like heavy clouds. So yeah, I've got a, a lot of habitual thinking going on.

I'm so used to it, and that's all you need to know. you're in your head again, but it will pass. So these little sort of, snippets, which most of us know about, but just to be reminded that, we can get caught up in our heads and thoughts very quickly. Because the brain or the mind goes at lightning speed

[00:06:37] **Susan:** And like you said earlier, it's habit as well. it's a habit. I think anyone listening to this, I can't speak for everybody obviously, but most of us have thinking going on all the time. there's a running commentary of whatever it might be, from when you wake up in the morning to when you go to bed at night.

And it often sounds like it's helpful or it's protecting us somehow. And, for something like crossing the road, when you have got the voice telling you, "Look both ways," yeah, that's helpful because you don't want to get killed crossing the road. But a lot of the time, like you were talking about the shoulds and everything there, it's not helpful

But I suppose maybe the thing is we're not always noticing that it's going on

[00:07:39] **James:** No, it becomes automatic language. I should be further along in my business, I should be thinner, I should be healthier, I should be fitter, I should be earning more money. and it's going on so fast until you see, "Oh my God, I'm shoulding on myself," Or I ought to, I have to, I must do. Rather than I intend to or I want to or I choose to. That's a bit more empowering. I notice it with my clients, they say, "You know what? I should have got promoted by now." I work with big firms, big, very big firms, and, they... I notice that they put a lot of shoulds on themselves, and should implies punishing. you're in your head.



it's like shoulding is like you're g- making yourself feel bad, it's giving you a sense of guilt, but it's automatic. we've become accustomed to, to use this should, kind of language in our heads or thoughts. what do you think?

[00:08:34] **Susan:** I, yeah, I think that, and I think we see it all around us as well, James. Especially, I think always in a way. if I think back to when I started working first, for example, way back in the last century, you went to work and maybe you weren't as well-dressed as the person beside you, or you were better dressed than the person beside you.

But you're always comparing your experience to somebody else's as if somehow they should be the same or we should have the same things. And that often happens, I think, when it comes to things like promotions. Because if you started work with the same people and you see them getting promoted and you're still in the same place, then of course you're gonna think, "I should be promoted." So it's sometimes hard to break out from the way the world works or the way things seem they should be

[00:09:41] **James:** It is. It's a bit like breaking out of the matrix, isn't it? we have a collective way of thinking, you can call it the collective consciousness, and this is how we grow up. This is how we should think. maybe some of the shoulds are helpful, but most of them are not. But how many people really follow what they want?

Very few if I'm in a job I hate, normally I say, I've gotta get out of this place." Versus, you know what? I wanna change. I wanna move out. I wanna move on some people say, "Well, if you say you want something, then that implies you haven't got it." I relate to that. I've read books about if I want more money, that means I don't have the money that I want, so that, that's coming from not enough. But this is not wanting where you're grasping, "I have to have the money."

It's, "No, I want money," or, "I want the toast," or, "I wanna go to Whitley for a week." It's clean Sounds like I'm promoting the course, right?

[00:10:53] **Susan:** I think you're promoting the... I think, see, I'm going off into my head trying to come up with what I think you're

So really interesting. But actually what you're doing is pointing us to discernment

That's what you're doing. I- that's

[00:11:14] **James:** what is discernment then for you?

[00:11:16] **Susan:** So I might wake up tomorrow and go, "I want more money because blah, blah, blah, blah," and I have a whole story about it or whatever. I might just want toast.



[00:11:28] **James:** And the toast one is like this kind of low down, I didn't have a big fanfare about it. There wasn't a because, like you said earlier on.

[00:11:36] **Susan:** So it's clean. Whereas the I want a new house because I want to live by the sea because I'm sick of living in the city because the story just grows and grows. And maybe I just want to live by the sea Clean

[00:11:55] **James:** Yeah

[00:11:58] **Susan:** It doesn't mean I'm gonna get it or it's going to happen, but I can still want it

[00:12:04] **James:** There's nothing wrong with wanting something even if you don't get the, the house by the sea or the place by the sea. Nothing wrong with that. And then, some people get discouraged because they don't get the place by the sea

[00:12:16] **Susan:** And that is the difference then between the wanting and needing. I feel like I need to have that or else my life will no longer be complete, or will never be complete

[00:12:27] **James:** I'll never be happy until I get X, right? And that's again, that's thought. I'll never be happy until I get X. I'll never be happy until I lose so much weight

[00:12:43] **Susan:** Why do we do this to ourselves, James, over and over

[00:12:47] **James:** Because we compare ourselves, we go to social media, everyone's got a cool life except you,

[00:12:54] **Susan:** Thanks.

[00:12:55] **James:** Yeah, everyone's got posting pictures of their g- their green smoothies in the morning and their wonderful veggie lunch and their amazing looking bodies. I should be like that So I don't do that. I don't post anything.

I have my green smoothies, but I don't post it. What I'm saying is, do you know what I'm s-saying? That in society there is this, way of how you should live and be Imagine putting on your thing, "I wanted an extra piece of toast this morning, so here it is."

I don't know

[00:13:34] **Susan:** Maybe we'll start a trend here, James. How many pieces of toast did you have today?



[00:13:39] **James:** didn't beat myself up because I wanted to put honey on it. I didn't beat myself up because I was gonna gain more calories and I was going against my diet and all, all the kind of like stuff around it, the thinking. but that's an unusual thing to see. I know people on social media, just say, "Yeah, today I decided to binge-watch something on Netflix."

Great. That's what they wanted. and I think that wanting and knowing it's something that you have to be reminded of yourself because you go back into the old habits very quickly. I notice that. 'Cause you can go to these events as w- as we did in A- April, and then within about three or four weeks, then the old stuff comes back

[00:14:31] **Susan:** I'm, at the moment I'm calling When I catch myself

[00:14:37] **James:** I'm calling it the catch of the day.

Nice

[00:14:41] **Susan:** it's always a bit of a game. It's like I'm fishing, but I'm not really seriously fishing. So if I notice that I'm getting caught up in talking myself out of things, generally is how it is with me. I can't do that because," or, "Nobody will do this," or, "No one will listen," that kind of stuff. I now notice and I stop because I don't need to think that.

[00:15:06] **James:** Yeah.

[00:15:07] **Susan:** I just need to do what I wanted to do without the justification. I tend to try to justify my actions a lot when they don't need it

[00:15:17] **James:** Yeah. So the, it's a, let's say it's, how can I say? It's so exhausting living like that. I should and I have to, and I've gotta push myself and force things

[00:15:30] **Susan:** But like anything, if you don't know that there's another way, then the exhaustion is just part and parcel. You're not questioning it, it, are you? It's the whole fish in water thing, back to the catch of the day. But it's the whole fish in water thing and, how's the water? And the fish doesn't know what you're talking about because the fish is just surrounded by water

[00:15:54] **James:** Yeah. And you used a comment there. Now I know they mention it on the course. I don't have to think that way. So if you've got, a thought stream going, I'm always going to be overweight." I don't have to think that way That's just a thought. But it's a convincing story of the mind.



Don't have to think that way, but no, I'm gonna put on this weight because my mother was like that, my dad was like that, and everyone in the family was like that, therefore I should be like that. And suddenly you're caught in the story and the thinking. No, I don't have to think that way. I don't have to be like them

[00:16:30] **Susan:** Yeah, my life my way

[00:16:32] **James:** Life My Way. Michael Neill talks about, and it come from the, the guy who had the epiphany, Sydney Banks, "I'm only one thought away from experiencing a sense of peace or wellbeing." One thought away. It sounds too simple, doesn't it? Maybe it is. Maybe it's too simple

[00:16:55] **Susan:** I think that the, the beaut- there's beauty in the simplicity for me. That it is, it's, it is simple, but that doesn't make it an easy thing to do

[00:17:09] **James:** No, sometimes the simpler things are the hardest things to do. They really are. wow, I can do that. And then when you put it into practice, your mind gets very complicated. So the simple things can be quite challenging to do

[00:17:24] **Susan:** Even to talk about what I want. It's very simple, and yet y- we've had to come at it, not had to, but we've gone around it in a few different ways to make it come to life, Because, it's a very simple thing, isn't it? I want an extra slice of toast. But it's because we load all of that with different meanings and questions, and what does it say about me, and what will I do tomorrow, and what if there's not enough for somebody else, or whatever.

We complicate or make things more complex than they need to be

[00:18:05] **James:** Yeah. There was a quote, I read from a book years ago. It says, "We are more complicated than we think and more simple than we know." That's what we're... It overlays what we're, what we've been going through with that course Sometimes for people, simplicity is boring

[00:18:28] **Susan:** Simplicity is beautiful

[00:18:29] **James:** people wanna complicate it

[00:18:33] **Susan:** Yesterday I was out walking and, 'cause I love to go to, to look at flowers and stuff because they're simple in a way. They're, you put in a seed, it grows. They're beautifully complex in how they look and the formation, especially dahlias and things like that, but they're simple. Anyway, yesterday I was out walking and there was a big tree on the, the avenue that I walk up and down, and there was an L plate. Somebody had



hammered an L plate, like a learner's driving, learner's permit thingy onto a tree, and I just thought how funny. a tree never had to learn how to be a tree.

[00:19:15] **James:** No?

[00:19:16] **Susan:** It doesn't go to school to learn how to grow, to produce leaves, to shed the leaves, to do any of that

[00:19:25] **James:** A tree does trees. It trees itself.

[00:19:28] **Susan:** It's simple

[00:19:29] **James:** Yeah, it doesn't even know it's a tree

[00:19:31] **Susan:** No. And if a tree thought about being a bird, it would live a life of misery

[00:19:38] **James:** And that's what we do. I think I should be like... I remember I spent some years in personal development industry. I was working with a personal development speaker. he wasn't Tony Robbins, he was like him. But, Tony Robbins is the go-to guy, and so many people wanna be like him They are like trees wanting to be birds. No, Tony Robbins is Tony Robbins. He's unique. He's got, some amazing ways of going about teaching his stuff, but I'm not him

I wanna be like Tony Robbins. No, what about just being me? And this is the other thing, we kept getting reminded is show up, be yourself, and to respond with what shows up in the moment. in my coaching, I spent many years in coaching, and I have techniques and methods and tools for clients if they want it, but I'd noticed in the last couple of years I show up, I've got no plans, I'm myself and I respond to whatever happens in the moment with the client, and it seemed to go quite well As they say, the now is the how

[00:20:50] **Susan:** And I'm a big believer of that as well, and it's certainly been my coaching approach for the last couple of years. at the beginning when I started out, tools, techniques, I have to do this, I have to have this ready, need to get in the zone or whatever. Whereas now I'm very conscious of being present To the human in front of me and that's what matters

[00:21:16] **James:** that seems to be what they want because most people are not present with them. They are... People are hungry to be heard and to be connected to through presence. That's what I've noticed as a coach

[00:21:34] **Susan:** And that's simple



[00:21:35] **James:** Some of my clients, they're way more brighter than I am, more skillful. They know more about business than I do, but I hardly ever talk about that stuff. I know something about it. I've been in the area, but as best I c- can, I try to connect in with them and find out what's going on for them

[00:21:53] **Susan:** And I suppose I would say anyway that none of us are what we do, James, are we?

Yeah And maybe the listeners can tell that we've done the same. We've shown up here without a plan other than responding to what comes up between us. And what's interesting to me is before we pressed record, James did have something to bring into the room, and we've got, a- 30 minutes into our conversation almost with that, without

[00:22:50] **James:** Yeah, I'm a bit surprised 'cause I, y- yeah, I had a, like a sheet of paper. I just five, 10 minutes before the call I just thought, "Why don't we talk about X?" And then, you mentioned something and, I- let's just see what shows up, and I prefer that. And here we are after half an hour's conversation talking about Your Life, Your Way And I think that's great because, I can give some tips and tricks.

I was gonna talk about navigating uncertainty 'cause there's a lot of uncertainty in the world. It's a theme. I, I can offer approaches, but perhaps, it's more appropriate we talk about your life your way. And I think that if you live your life your way, you'll probably handle uncertainty quite well

[00:23:33] **Susan:** To me, uncertainty's a bit like the water for the fish, 'cause there is nothing else. I firmly believe the only thing that I can be certain about was that I was born and that I am going to die.

[00:23:48] **James:** Yeah,

[00:23:49] **Susan:** And pretty much

[00:23:50] **James:** and you'll pay taxes

[00:23:52] **Susan:** well, even that at times. But yeah, I was thinking about this actually funnily enough the other day, James, and my sister, now she was born mentally and physically handicapped, but she lived to be 33.

She never paid taxes. So it's also not a definite. I know we say that people, that, that's one of the certainties in life. It is, of course, it's a certainty, but it also is that we live in a society. there are certain things that we buy into, don't we, or live into. But, and I was thinking about this earlier on today, I'm getting a train tomorrow down into Devon.



Now, I can't be certain, first of all, that I'll wake up tomorrow, or that the train will go on time, that I'll make my connections. There are all of these things, but I don't think about that because I'd never leave the house

[00:24:48] **James:** True, and a lot of people do, especially people who've had depression or trauma, they do catastrophize what's happening. 'Cause I've done it, 'cause I've gone through this, and your mind starts forecasting will the train be on time? Will it crash? W- will this go in? W- will I be late? Will the people I meet, will they...

[00:25:07] **Susan:** Whatever, and that is just completely exhausting. And I know it's done in by default thinking 'cause your mind is trying to protect you. And you're trying to predict how you will solve the problem that hasn't even arisen

[00:25:23] **James:** In other words, you don't wanna let go of control. And one thing with Michael Neill, and Sydney Banks and all the other ones is that effectively, we are not driving the bus

[00:25:34] **Susan:** Or the train

[00:25:35] **James:** Or the train or wherever it is, our lives. And most people say, you gotta make decisions and make goals." Yeah.

Yeah, I want some toast I wanna go to Italy. That's a, a wanting or a goal, but ultimately that could... I wanna go to Italy next week and then, maybe the planes don't work 'cause of the, the issues with energy and so on. But I can't think about that. I can. what if the- there's not enough fuel in the plane and blah, blah, blah, blah.

But that's me catastrophizing and it's such a common thing in soc- rum- most people call it ruminating. We ruminate and ruminate. I do because I be- I've become very good at that. I've noticed, but I notice it, and that's another thing we haven't talked about is the power of noticing.

So it's important when you, "Oh God, I'm ruminating." Okay I'm thinking the worst about taking the, the train down to the south. Okay

[00:26:38] **Susan:** And if I don't think about any of it, okay, so I'm just- I booked my ticket, blah, blah, blah, I don't really think about it, I have a level of certainty that everything's going to work out. But yet I have no idea what's ahead. And it's a funny thing. we do that all the time, you could say. we book our trip to Italy for May 2027 a- and we're certain it's going to happen, and yet there's all of that uncertainty before we ever get on a plane So uncertainty is the water, uncertainty is life. And I find it so interesting that it's the thing that seems to bug us the most, yet it's the one thing that we all live with all the time



[00:27:30] **James:** Yeah, li- life is uncertain. Even the Buddhists say life is uncertain. But we wanna make it certain, so what do we do? We try to control life with our thinking. And when we get into our thinking, then we get exhausted, tired out

it's like, trusting in the process. Okay, I don't know how to get to Italy in, in three months time, but I'm sure we'll get there. I'm sure it w- I'll work something out. I'm sure we'll be fine. If we don't. We'll... If something gets in the way, I'll handle it. That's it.

that's how I kinda look at it as, I'll handle it if I can't get to Italy in, in three months time for the vacation Does that make sense, any of that?

[00:28:14] **Susan:** yeah, it absolutely does. And I suppose what I'm... What do we do with this as people? what, it's a default, it's a habitual way of thinking that we want the control, we want the certainty. How do we just live- Have you figured it out, James?

[00:28:36] **James:** I wish I, if I did, I'd probably create podcasts like you or something. I don't know. no, I haven't figured it out, and I don't wanna figure it out. Figuring out means I'm in my head

[00:28:46] **Susan:** Oh yeah, no. Okay, that's the wrong turn of phrase. Absolutely right. so how do you live with this, let's say?

[00:28:52] **James:** Yeah, I notice when I f- I flip between when I'm feeling down and unhappy and moody, I know I'm up here. And sometimes it's hard to get out of that space. But I realize, from my c- this is h- heavy weather at the moment. I'm just gonna have to sit with it. It's like if there's a, a strong storm, you can't wish the clouds and the rain away.

they'll last for a half a day or whatever until it passes. But I think there's something about trusting in life, trusting that you're not, ultimately driving the bus of your life Yeah, you wanna know what the next step is, that's fine. But ultimately, you're not tr- kinda driving the bus.

I live in Spain now. Three and a half years ago, I had no idea I'd be in Spain so quickly. Never had any plans to do it, but here I am. when I met my wife, Anna, some years ago, I didn't have a plan to come to Spain and meet her. She didn't speak English, I didn't speak Spanish, but it kinda happened I trusted, 'cause I had to let go of a, a previous life.

So Is that following intuition? Okay. Knowing intuition W- and I think that if you can follow your knowing, your intuition or wisdom, whatever you wanna call it, I think you're just gonna have a lot more simpler and more uncluttered life



[00:30:20] **Susan:** Which is the opposite of what we're conditioned to believe that we need. The, the uncluttered is such a lovely image for me, because shopping seems to be a national pastime or an international pastime. I must have this stuff, And also down the road has just got the latest version of whatever it is, so I need to get that now.

The, this, this accumulation of things, of clutter. and then that complicates life 'cause I have to look after all of them and keep up with the Joneses as

[00:31:03] **James:** Yeah, and then it builds up and then you wanna get rid of it and, and a lot of people who are obsessed with shopping is because they're running away from themselves. Nice to shop, I like to shop, but, some people use it as a kind of an escape. And that's another thing, we have addictions, don't we?

Shopping or gambling or smoking or whatever. And that, that's where we've taken on a lot of unrecognized thought and not a s- a lot of it's painful thinking. 'Cause one thing, I liked with Michael Neil is that we feel our thinking

So our feeling and our thinking is a c- same coin, but there's two sides to it. So if I'm feeling sad, then I must be having sad thoughts

If I'm feeling joyful, then I must be having joyful thoughts. So we feel our thoughts It's not one separate from the other. they're joined It's quite simple really, isn't it?

[00:32:10] **Susan:** And the great thing about that, again, it's back to, we don't have to think that or think that way that we talked about earlier. Because if I am feeling sad or angry or something I don't necessarily want to be feeling

[00:32:30] **James:** I'm feeling that way because I'm thinking that way. So all that feeling is doing is helping me understand how I'm thinking.

Yeah

[00:32:41] **Susan:** It's not saying you have to solve it or anything like that

[00:32:44] **James:** No, that's the other thing, it's not techniques in using affirmations. they're helpful affirmations or techniques or... No, it's just, seeing where your experiences are coming from, and it's effectively, a lot of it is your thinking. We live in a thought-based reality, right?

I've heard it in books like Think and Grow Rich and so on, Napoleon Hill, a classic book. but this, this approach is more, okay, or if you're having a really scary thought, think, "Oh, it is



thought." I've gotta do something about this fearful thought. It's gonna kill me, 'Cause some, some people do think, and I've had it myself, I thought that my feelings were dangerous.

I grew up thinking that having feelings were dangerous And so I had started having a lot of dangerous thinking But the thoughts are clouds and we're like the sky. We, it's, "Oh, here we go again. We're having some really scary thoughts about how I feel."

[00:33:50] **Susan:** What has it done for your life seeing things like this? Seeing thoughts as

[00:33:57] **James:** I still...

[00:33:58] **Susan:** optional as

[00:33:59] **James:** Yeah, but just because we know this stuff, it doesn't mean you, you get away scot-free, right? Even Michael Neal said the other day he was in a terrible mood for a week, and he was angry and blah, blah, blah. all, a, a lot of these teachers, it's not "Oh, I, I've got get out of jail free card, and I'll never be in pain again."

What it does is it gives you, A deeper understanding about how life works for me and not to take my thoughts so seriously. That's it, is not to take it so serious, 'cause I have had a lot of very serious thinking That I'm a certain person, I'm going crazy, I'm not good enough, blah, blah, blah.

But they're just thoughts

[00:34:41] **Susan:** It's,

[00:34:42] **James:** ingrained.

[00:34:42] **Susan:** yeah

[00:34:46] **James:** I think, "Okay, I don't have to think that way. I'm not good enough. I'm not good enough as a coach." that's just a thought. that's insecure thinking. Now a lot of people say, I must be insecure." I hear that a lot. "I must be insecure." No, you have insecure thoughts. Big difference It's hard to say to somebody, "You're never insecure." No, but I am. no, it's your thinking

[00:35:25] **Susan:** it is really hard to get our head around, and of course we can't ever probably get our heads around this because the heads are responsible for the thinking. it's seeing where our experience comes from, what makes our experience is our own thinking, doesn't make a lot of sense



[00:35:47] **James:** Most of my thoughts are, most of my thinking is me telling myself lies. Unless it's helpful the question is this helpful? No. Does it make me feel good? No. why wouldn't I let it go then? does it, is it helpful me thinking about a lo- a lovely trip to Italy?

Yeah. Does it make me feel good? Yeah. I'll keep that

[00:36:12] **Susan:** You're gonna be booking that flight after this call, aren't you?

[00:36:15] **James:** So a- and the other thing that, beyond all this thoughts and stuff like that, one thing, and I find it a bit of a challenge myself, is that it's connecting into the nice feeling of you, the feeling of me, the feeling of you. perhaps not the personality, but the real me, the feeling of me, the feeling of you is something we all share.

We all share a place of us that is quite nice and lovely, but it's covered by thoughts. And I know even this week I've had a lot of ... Even though I know this stuff, I notice all these thoughts build up trying to convince me there is not a nice part of me. But there is, Sydney Banks, the, the guy who's, who found this, what, 40 years ago, who just said, "Listen for the nice feeling and then follow that."

So if I got a good feeling to book Italy, I'm gonna go with that

Yeah, I have a good feeling about Italy. It's this course we signed up for last year. Like you, I had a good feeling to do it, so I followed the feeling

[00:37:21] **Susan:** It was clean as well. It's

[00:37:22] **James:** It was clean,

[00:37:23] **Susan:** clean earlier. And I love that you brought up that feeling, James, and the feeling of you, because for me today, I struggled to get to sleep last night. For whatever reason, I just was awake for hours. Like four and a half hours in bed before I fell asleep.

and this morning when I woke up, my immediate thinking was, "Oh, today's gonna be horrible. I had such a bad sleep. I haven't had enough..." And then I went, "I don't have to think that."

[00:37:56] **James:** Yeah

[00:37:57] **Susan:** I actually don't, because I know if I connect in with me, then I'll be here, and I can pretty much do anything regardless of how much sleep I have or haven't had



[00:38:16] **James:** So most people wake up after a bad n- I had a crap sleep, I won't have enough energy for the day. The, I must have some kind of a underlying anxiety or depression 'cause they say when you read it on the internet, if people don't sleep they must be depressed. All these stories build up.

No, I had a crap sleep last night and that's it

[00:38:33] **Susan:** And maybe I'll go a bit easier on me today, but when I need to show up for a client or a podcast conversation or whatever it is, I'll be there

[00:38:42] **James:** Sleepy or not sleepy. sometimes I can wake up in a really low mood, right? Quite often actually. And then I've got an hour later, I've got a coaching call with a pretty high p- high profile person. But I don't let my mood take me out. I notice I'm in a low mood, but I show up, be myself, and I respond to what happens

Whether I'm in a low mood or not. And it's funny because after 10 minutes in the conversation with the client, all that moody crap goes out the window. Now I don't say, I'm gonna say an affirmation. I'm effective. I'm effective. I'm an amazing coach." Yeah. I'm at peace. I'm at peace. it might be helpful, but I don't need to go through all that. that's extra work. I'm not in a good mood at the moment, but I'm gonna show up and see what happens. I'm gonna trust

[00:39:40] **Susan:** And today at lunchtime, my partner said to me, what will you do today to get in the zone for your podcast recording?"

[00:39:49] **James:** And I said, "I'll show up." And he was like, do- will you not have a 10-minute something or other, rit-?" And I was like, "No, I'll turn on the Zoom and we'll see where we go."

yeah. Now it sounds like an odd thing for someone to hear because not many people hear that

[00:40:11] **Susan:** And they might not be listening a- still as well. We may have lost everyone.

[00:40:15] **James:** you know Eckhart Tolle. He hasn't done the Sydney Banks three principles or whatever, but he says, I'm on the stage now. I d- I have no scripts, and I don't know what I'm gonna talk about." And he has a, does a three-day retreat, if anyone knows about Eckhart Tolle, Power of Now and stuff.

Got a huge following, but he's another person that shows up, he's himself, and he lets whatever wisdom come out on stage No script



[00:40:41] **Susan:** and honestly, James, I would imagine anyone listening will have an example in their own life of where they did something like that. Now, it mightn't be a three-day retreat on stage, but where you surprised yourself with your own knowing or your own inner advice that you gave someone or how you responded to a situation.

I think we all have examples of that in our lives. We just think they're exceptional

[00:41:11] **James:** Yeah. we're more, we're much bigger than we think We're convinced we're only a certain s- size with certain limitations, but we're so much, there's so much more to us. However, we need to be open to that, I think. We've got to allow ourselves to say, There might be much more to me than what I think my life."

[00:41:34] **Susan:** And if I'm sitting in a meeting with seven other people, that's not gonna help me.

[00:41:42] **James:** Yeah

[00:41:42] **Susan:** I think, there is this, it's, we're having a conversation, we've given it space to have this conversation. But I think, but for a lot of people perhaps, bringing it into the practical day-to-day of the realities of paying the mortgage, or holding down a job, or picking up kids from school, or looking after elderly parents, whatever it might be, it seems at odds with that

[00:42:07] **James:** i- if my common sense says, I've gotta pay the mortgage and I've got two kids," then I guess my common sense is, w- I'm in a certain job, I don't particularly like it, but right now what's in front of me, earn the money to pay for the mortgage and make sure the kids are okay. that's common sense

[00:42:27] **Susan:** But if it's eating away at you

[00:42:30] **James:** I'm not happy in the job, but right now it serves its purpose. However, I aspire to do something bigger and better in the future. I don't know when that's gonna happen

[00:42:40] **Susan:** And I think that's maybe one of the things that we haven't talked about is seeing opportunities and seeing possibilities. That actually often we're looking at our lives as it is,

[00:42:54] **James:** and not looking beyond our current ... We think our circumstances are fixed



Yeah. What stops you, perhaps tomorrow you or me or the people or the person watching this can wake up tomorrow and they might completely have different view of life. And you think, "Oh my God, what happened there?" That could happen, but we're so caught up in our stories that we- we're going in this Groundhog Day, that movie they had in the '80s.

We're constantly repeating and repeating. But, what's stopping you from realizing that as Michael Neill says, everything is up for grabs. Everything. Life is up for grabs. Anything could happen tomorrow

[00:43:41] **Susan:** I can't believe this, but I was thinking about Groundhog Day this morning. Yeah. Isn't that funny? And how actually Groundhog Day is a great example as well of what it takes to wake up

[00:43:55] **James:** if you remember in the movie, he was so fed up with his life, he committed suicide, and he kept waking up at 6:00 o'clock in the morning. And then he started changing the way he looked at things. He changed his thoughts, and he started to become more benevolent and helping people, and suddenly he broke through the patterns

[00:44:13] **Susan:** He stopped putting himself front and center of everything and

[00:44:16] **James:** Yeah. He was giving, he was helpful, he was having fun

[00:44:22] **Susan:** Yeah. He was seeing the lighter side of life

[00:44:25] **James:** Yeah, and then maybe, g- a good movie because it's showing you sometimes you've gotta be in a lot of pain before you think, "You know what? I'm just gonna have some fun."

[00:44:36] **Susan:** And what's the worst that could happen?

[00:44:38] **James:** I'll stay in the ground get- waking up at six for the next, for the rest of my life. Okay.

[00:44:43] **Susan:** But that's your choice

[00:44:45] **James:** Exactly. It's your choice. There's something in you that wants to, that... This is the, sounds weird, that wants to stay in it. Keeps us safe, keeps us small

[00:44:58] **Susan:** Or is that a need though, I wonder?



[00:44:59] **James:** maybe it's a need. Perhaps it is a need. Sometimes we think a want is a need

[00:45:03] **Susan:** the wanting in us wants what it wants, but we just don't hear it 'cause we've got so much going on. I don't think the wanting wants us to stay small and alone and lost. I don't know

[00:45:17] **James:** I think ultimately, we're creative beings. we have that course Creating the Impossible, where you've only got a 20% chance of making your dream come true in 90 days. That's all about creating stuff that you would never dream about

[00:45:37] **Susan:** And having some fun while you're at it

[00:45:39] **James:** 20... But yeah, I did it three years ago. I sat there on the January doing that course, 90 days, and I just wrote down three things I... that would be impossible for me to make happen. Now, most of those things don't come, but I wrote down, "Move to Spain within three months." I moved in four months.

I was planning to move in 18 months or two years, but four months later I was here in Valencia

[00:46:02] **Susan:** Wow

[00:46:04] **James:** No, I thought, no, that's not possible. I was thinking, no, that's impossible. But one thing led to another, and my wife got a job here and all, all sorts of things, and then before we knew it, we moved.

[00:46:14] **Susan:** Wow

[00:46:15] **James:** So it can happen

[00:46:18] **Susan:** Even the impossible is possible.

[00:46:21] **James:** Yeah

[00:46:24] **Susan:** James,

we

[00:46:25] **James:** what are you getting from all this? What are you making of all this, our conversation today?



[00:46:30] **Susan:** I've loved it. we are actually out of time. That's what I

[00:46:33] **James:** I can see that. We're coming up for the hour

[00:46:35] **Susan:** and I've just enjoyed actually having a chance to speak about this outside of the kind of classroom environment as well, because it's easy to go back into your thinking about it

and not actually feel it or get it.

[00:46:56] **James:** Yeah

[00:46:58] **Susan:** with another person, when we're thinking about our audience, but we're also conscious of one another and where we're going, there's been some interesting Phrases, ways of looking at it. I think that might be helpful for people

[00:47:20] **James:** for me, by sharing it with you, sh- they say sharing the feeling, by, by sharing it, by explaining, I'm sharing it with you, but I'm also hearing myself talk and I'm getting reminded of the basics 'cause I can easily get lost in my thinking. And that's fine As I say, there's no "Oh, now I know it, then I'm gonna be free from suffering and pain and..." no. I've just become more aware. I notice more. And noticing is the, is, should we say, as Buddha would say, it's the... He says that the, the gates of the deathless are always open, and he's talking about awareness, noticing.

That's a break from the pain, the suffering, and the difficulties So I've enjoyed doing it because it's just reminded me, of the basics

[00:48:18] **Susan:** And that everything comes from nothing

[00:48:21] **James:** True. Everything comes from nothing and then goes back. And we haven't talked about the form and the formless.

[00:48:25] **Susan:** that's way too much for one,

[00:48:26] **James:** too...

[00:48:27] **Susan:** we'll have to do that again, James

[00:48:28] **James:** yeah, but that, but bottom line is, yeah, it's, everything comes from nothing, the formless, and goes back to it



[00:48:34] **Susan:** Yeah. When we showed up here today, all we had was a Zoom link to begin this conversation, and off we went

[00:48:41] **James:** Yeah. Good one, Susan. thanks for inviting me on the call

[00:48:44] **Susan:** It's been my pleasure, James. Absolutely my pleasure. And if people would like to know more about you or connect with you, what's the best way of doing that?

[00:48:52] **James:** right now I'm full up with coaching contracts in large companies. I'm working for some... W- working with very large firms. but if people wanna check me out on LinkedIn, James Kilgarrieff, that's K-I-L-G-A-R-R-I-F-F. Check me out on LinkedIn, just say, whatever, s- saw the podcast.

That'd be great, but right now I'm full up with, Nice problem with coaching.

[00:49:16] **Susan:** Fantastic. Well, have a lovely evening.

[00:49:19] **James:** Great. Thanks, Susan. Thanks. Thank you. Bye

