

Timothy

There's just nothing more exciting than going to a basketball game at Master Square Garden. You know, it's just like, you see the celebrities, you see Spike Lee yelling at a referee. Like, there's just an energy in the place. People really care for the team. You go to Brooklyn, it's kind of like, they just, you know, maybe, maybe once the kids have gone, like, maybe once a generation pass of Brooklyn Nets fans, then, you know, there'll be some sort of, uh, but there's still just like a feeling of like, they adopted a team from New Jersey and there's, you know, it's nice to have a team of Brooklyn, but it's gonna take a generation to kind of feel that, like, that real fandom for the team. You know, a lot of, there's a lot of like, people, like salty Knicks fans that have kind of like, transferred over, you know, that kind of like, so I think, yeah, it doesn't, you don't feel that energy for the Nets the way you do for the Knickss. Of course. It's just,

Neil

Yeah. I thought, I thought you, when you told me you were a Knicks fan, as that can go, and I was telling you I was a Raptors fan. I thought you were gonna say you were a Cle, like a Cleveland fan.

Timothy

Yeah. No. Like,

Neil

Like, you're from Cleveland, right? So how, how'd you, how'd you not end up like a LeBron Cavaliers type of fan? Well, when were you born? You're like nineteen eighty, eighty one?

Timothy

Yeah. When I was a kid. Like, I loved the Cavs. It was like the nineties. They had a great team. A lot of the times. Mark Price, Brad Doherty, Larry Naz, like they had this squad. I stopped wa I kind of gave up sports for a while, and I kind of became what I thought I, you know, but I was like, oh, I'm an artist now and I'm going to art school. And like, I don't, I, you know, I'm, yeah.

Neil

Cause you painted, you painted houses in Cleveland, like million dollar houses for like five years after has, right? Like, I, I heard you chat with Debbie Millman and, you know, she titled it sort of like barely finished high school. Five years old painting. I did painting out, like you said, million dollar homes. You got into like, the art of it, and then mm-hmm. <affirmative>. And then, then you moved to New York to go to design school. Graphic school. Design school. What's, what's Design

Timothy

SVA is a the School of Visual Arts design school

Neil

OK, which is where Debbie Millman is, right?

Timothy

She teaches there. Yeah. So do I. Now.

Neil

Did you have her as a teacher?

Timothy

I did not actually. Uh, she had this class that all, like my friends took, which was a class dedicated to kind of like presentation Yeah. Or designers and artists and knowing how to like, you know, present your work, talk about your work, talk about yourself. And there was a lot of that kind of stuff. She would, I think she records students. Uh, their, their, she, they give speeches in front of the class. She records 'em, she makes them watch it over to talk about how many times they say, um, or repeat certain patterns and all this kind of thing. I, I heard it was a wonderful class. Uh, and

Neil

What do you teach there now?

Timothy

Well, right now, I, I'm taking a break, but we, me and my friend Jessica Walsh, my co a colleague, my, we've collaborated on a lot of projects together. We teach

Neil

You guys did the 40 Days of Dating together?

Timothy

Yeah, we did 40 Days of Dating.

Neil

That was really, I really liked that.

Timothy

12 Kinds of Kindness.

Neil

So, so quick summary. Like, like, sorry. Just, there's people listening to this Timothy that, that like Yeah. You're talking to the librarians and book sellers and book lovers around the world. So, so can you just give us a 30 sec, what is 40 Days of Dating?

Timothy

40 days of Dating is... It was a blog that became a book. This is the book. Um, it, it, it, you know, basically it was a social experiment that my friend Jessica Walsh and I came up. We came up with this idea. We were both single at the time and we were really good friends.

Neil

You're like in your mid, mid twenties kind of thing?

Timothy

Yeah. Or mid late twenties, early thirties. Okay. Um, and you're

Neil

Living in New York?

Timothy

Living in New York.

Neil

Where, where? In New York.

Timothy

Uh, in Manhattan. Okay. So we came up with this idea. We had, we'd always been friends, but we had completely opposite relationship issues at the time. We were both single, but it was very stereotypical. I was kind of like, you know, playing around not serious, kind of, you know, quasi just, just like, you know, that's not serious about, you know, just like really focused on my career, but also like, you know, not, not always being upfront about my intentions. Um, you know, just kind of being a player a little bit, you know? And she would make fun of me about that and kind of be like, why are you doing this? Like, you know, blah, blah, blah. Like, why don't you find someone, you know, settle down with? She was a complete opposite. She was, uh, you know, always looking for the one. She'd go on two good dates.

Timothy

She was like, I'm ready. I like this guy is, you know, and I, and then she'd get her heart broken a lot, and we were kind of always making fun of each other for it. And it's very, you know, it's very like, Sex and the City New York. Like, it was very it very much was like these two single people in New York City trying to find their way, you know. And the dating scene here as, you know, forever awful. Um, and I was a part, I, I can see now how I was also a part of that being awful <laugh>, you know, just like, you're just not serious. You know, you're in your late twenties and you're kind of like in New York, and you're just on your career. Anyways, we decided...

Neil

You, you even have a quote about that. I, I actually wrote down. It's around toxic masculinity.

Timothy

Mm-hmm.

Neil

<affirmative>. And you say, I, I can't find the quote, but you say something like, you know, I think every guy has to look back and sort of take ownership for, you know, ills he may have caused.

Timothy

Yeah.

Neil

You, you go, you go kind of on the record pretty strongly about toxic masculinity, which I love. And so I, I, I wanna, you said that comment. So

Timothy

I'm a, you know, in a lot of ways I, I call myself a recovering misogynist. I say recovering because I'm constantly, you, you know, being a cis het man in this society, you're always gonna be sort of recovering in that sense if, if you're willing to do the work and unlearn certain postures and behaviors you learned as a kid and, and as a young adult. So I take ownership of all of that, you know, while there was never, like, you know, anything, uh, serious in the sense of sexual assault or something like that. Just, you know, being a person who was not clear about intentions at time or ghosting people, you know, just being like a, just being like a bag, you know? Um, but sex in the city, sex in the City, 40 days of Dating was, um, uh, I think an act of trying to figure that, that out a little bit.

Timothy

Anyways, so we decided we would date each other, Jessica and I as friends, and I put date in parentheses. Uh, we would date each other in quotes. I mean, we would put date each other as a form, uh, uh, as a way to observe this behavior of ours and to maybe tackle some of these issues we had in dating. Uh, and so we came up with this idea that we would, we came up with these set of rules that we would have to like, obey for the 40 days that were kind of like the foundation work of the social experiment, which were like, we had to see each other every day for 40 days. We had to go on a weekend trip together. We saw a couple therapists together weekly. Wow. We, uh, we had to fill out this form that we came up with this set of eight questions every day for the 40 days, which was really the foundation for the blog, which became the book, which is every day you go to, if you go to, you know, this is day 20, um, day 27, Jessica is on the left, and I am on the right.

Timothy

And you see the same questions. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>, but you see two people ask, you know..

Neil

I love that. I love that I read those things. It's so funny. It's so funny. It's like the, it's like that, that old wedding game, or, you know, like, uh,

Timothy

Yeah. And you see how

Neil

She thought, she thought it's a beautiful thing

Timothy

Yeah, exactly. And you see how two people interpret experiences d wildly different, and all their inner thoughts that are happening that they're not telling each other. Uh, and we never read what we wrote until after.

Neil

Wow.

Timothy

So we did this, uh, experiment, and then we decided, okay, we could release this. What does it look like to release it? We created a website. We're both designers and art directors and artists. So, you know, that part became its own little project of fun just putting together this content and how it would best, you know, put potentially, uh, be put together for an audience.

Neil

I like the one, I grabbed it on my phone. It says like, turn to port, turn sideways. Like the first thing it does, it's like such a cool feature. You don't see that on phones very much.

Timothy

And Yeah. And we littered it with all the writing, you know, of each day with, uh, you know, things that you were, you know, images. So if we talked about going to a play with each show mm-hmm. <affirmative> images of the, of the tickets, or mm-hmm. <affirmative>, we show photos of, you know, all these things. Gifts we gave each other Yeah. Text messages between us, all this that helped, you know, tell a story in a more comprehensive way, um, as it was a new, you know, we really, I think we created a new, a really, a new kind of form of storytelling in that sense. Yeah. You know, this is, this is, you know, 2013, 12 2012. This is like 10 light years ago in social media events. You know? Yeah. Like blogs as you know, you know, you had, you had blog, like, blogs don't pop off like that anymore. They don't even exist. I, so it's, it's fascinating. You know, it's like,

Neil

Well, they do exist. I mean, they do. Like chapter two of this podcast was a, was a, was with, uh, my friend Frank Warren, who runs postsecret.com.

Timothy

Yeah, yeah of course

Neil

And, and he still gets like millions of hits a week. And yes, he has like a big social media falling, but like, you can just feel like his, his people are still there. How about Jenny Lawson? You know, The Bloggess?

Timothy

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Of course

Neil

You know, she wrote a blog post, uh, yesterday that mentioned me, and it's like B-boom. Like, it's still like,

Timothy

Well, your thing was like 2010.

Neil

2008 to 2012.

Timothy

Okay

Neil

I'm like, cake wreck days, fail blog days.

Timothy

<laugh>. You're like,

Neil

I'm like, Chuck Norris days

Timothy

You're like run dmc, man. You're like a Godfather, <laugh>. You're like,

Neil

I'm still here. I'm still here on my crutches with my tatty Little Books podcast <laugh>.

Neil

By the way, when you, when you, um, Timothy, when you, not to divert us, but like, I like that you said a recovering misogynist. I have never thought of myself in those terms, but I'm gonna apply it to myself today. I wanna try it on with you. Yeah. Cause I, I think there's probably stuff I can relate to that I haven't quite processed yet. And somewhere in there you read this book by Kevin Powell called, Who's Gonna Take the Weight. Subtitled Manhood, Race and Power in America, published in 2003 by Three Rivers Press cover's like a black guy in a suit with a white dress shirt pushing against, what looks like a glass door where he can see his own reflection. Like he's pushing himself back. I guess the title's in blocky, lowercase red, orange, yellow font across the center. You could probably tell us what typeface that is. I don't know. <laugh>. And, and the author's name is writ large at the bottom. And like the big yellow caps. This guy Kevin Powell, was an American writer, activist television, television personality, still alive today, born in 1966, in three essays by one of the most passionate and eloquent voices of his generation Kevin leads us to the heart of the searing issues facing us today from manhood, violence, and gender oppression to celebrity culture and hip hop. Mm-hmm. <affirmative> file this one under 3 0 5.89 for social sciences slash racism. Timothy, tell us about your relationship with this fascinating book,

Timothy

<laugh>. Well, it was one of the first books that I read. I think I read it when I was like 18 or 19. Um, and it was one of the fir first books that I ever read that really challenged, uh, white privilege for me, you know? Um, and which was something that wasn't in the zeitgeist like it is now.

Neil

So you read this when you were in Ohio?

Timothy

Yeah, I was in Ohio, and then I went to go see him speak at my community college. I was going, I went to a community college, tri-C shout out Holder Community College in Cleveland, Ohio.

Neil

What'd you take?

Timothy

I was taking all kinds of classes. Uh, you know, I was painting homes at the time, and I was, uh, I thought I was gonna be an interior designer cuz we worked in all these really beautiful houses and I was really enamored by it all but

Neil

Side note, for those listening, who can't see Timothy, if you're not on YouTube, he's still wearing a painter's hat.

Timothy

Yes, indeed.

Neil

The hat lives on

Timothy

Always, it's always, you know, you're always, uh, a version of you. I think we always carry these versions of ourselves.

Neil

I'm still blogging, man. I'm still blogging

Timothy

Comes out in all kinds of ways.

Neil

<laugh>, so you're, you're painting these houses. You're 18, 19 years old. You, you pick up this book, you then go hear him speak at the community college and then tell to like, oh, keep going. I, I didn't mean to sidetrack you here.

Timothy

No, well, you know, I grew up in an all-black neighborhood until I was like 12 or 13 years old. So, you know, I didn't even have a white friend until I was, you know, a teenager. So it's very much, you know, I kind of, coming from that community only being around, you know, outside of my family, only having black friends being around, you know, understanding their sensibilities, their, their culture, their humor, their way of seeing the world and stuff was, it's kind of ingrained in me in that sense because, you know, I, it's just how, uh, you, it's such a rare experience to have

Neil

Even your book. I Always Think It's Forever, which I've read and loved. And it's coming out in January, um, with, that's probably when this is gonna come out. Uh, it is written for those that have not read it yet. The entire frickin book is written in like, for lack of better words, hiphop verse.

Timothy

Well, it's spoken word in a lot of ways.

Neil

Um, yeah. Sorry. I totally mislabeled it.

Timothy

<laugh>. No, no, it's

Neil

<laugh>.

Timothy

I mean, it's not exactly a, a

Neil

The whole thing rhymes, man. You're like Dr. Seuss. That's what I'm saying.

Timothy

<laugh>. Um,

Timothy

But, uh, you know, so to kind of, you know, then to move to a neighborhood that was, um, I wouldn't say it was even predominantly... It was my, my high school was like 50 50, uh, white and black. But you know, suddenly they have all these like white friends and calling me by my last name, Goodman. It was, it was, it was a culture shock for me, you know? And they made fun of how I, how, how I was early, you know, early on when I moved to there to that school. Um, and it was just a weird thing to grapple with to see like, oh, am I wrong? Like, suddenly, like I had to think about like, white people don't have to think about race ever the same way. Men don't have to think about misogyny or sexism. Uh, the system's built for us,

Neil

The majority doesn't have to think about the minority.

Timothy

Yeah. And so I don't have to think about this, how these systems are stacked against me cuz the system is in my hand. But because I think, I think because I had that experience growing up, when I read Kevin's book at 18, which had only been, you know, five or six years since I had moved away from, from the neighborhood I grew up in, it really spoke to me because it felt it wasn't foreign. It, like, it was shocking

in a lot of ways, but it also wasn't, it was something that was very much, uh, I understood. And I never really had to grapple with the idea, you know, it was just, it, uh, I didn't have some great reckoning because I kind of grew up. So I was like, oh, this is incredibly, this incredibly makes sense. This is, um, I think what that book really talked about for me was how the intersection of race and sexism and all these kind of isms, how they all play into each other.

Timothy

And now those were wild kind of concepts for me to start thinking about. And how, you know, this guy was talking so openly about how he had been abusive in his earlier years, you know? And, um, and how he, what he was doing and talking and hear and reading a man talk about going to therapy. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>, uh, you know, and this is 20 years ago, I just had, I hadn't, you know, being 18 or whatever, I just had never read a book. Um, that was so, uh, um, that he, you know, he is really showing all his scars and, and warts and, and, and everything, you know, and his vulnerability and his pain and his regrets, uh, as a man, you know, and, and the, the way he's played into to the, um, the violence, uh, in this world. You know, it was, it was really eye-opening for me. So it made me want to, you know, any great book will, I think in, in yeah. In these kind of ways will make you want to look in the mirror and ask yourself, what am how am I playing? How am I contributing to, to these, you know, these issues and what can I do better? And all of that.

Neil

What, so what, so many questions, but what issues did it make you see inside yourself at the time that you were mm-hmm. <affirmative>, therefore kind of newly unhappy and aware of perhaps. Yeah. And as someone who like me, I'm gonna try to try on that label with you today, recovering misogynist, you know, what are some ways you, you you'd point someone like me, what kind of questions would I, you know, what are some good introspective questions to sort of try to figure that out for, for anyone listening or for me?

Timothy

Mm. Yeah. It's a good question. I mean, you have to ask yourself. Uh, I think how, how are we playing up, uh, stereotypical tropes of men and women and gender roles, you know, know first and foremost. Cuz it can just, it can be in such a minute way, you know, that, you know, even the way I interact with my, my partner or my girlfriend, you know, we talk about it a lot. Like, oh, are we doing this because I'm a man and you're a woman and this is how we've, you know mm-hmm. <affirmative> than conditioned to think about things mm-hmm. <affirmative> and take on these roles. What does it mean to do it in a different way?

Neil

Yeah. You know? I know. And when my wife Leslie, you know, when people come over, they're, everyone's still surprised that my wife Leslie's always the one barbecuing.

Timothy

Mm.

Neil

<laugh> I, I don't know how to barbecue.

Timothy

Yeah. Yeah.

Neil

And it's like, everyone kind of gives it a glance and then it's just like, you know, and I was married, I'm embarrassed to say I was married before, and it was the exact same in my, in, in my previous marriage. Like, I, whatever woman I'm in a relationship with, they barbecue.

Timothy

They barbecue, huh?

Neil

As an example.

Timothy

Hey,

Neil

Like, what are some examples for you?

Timothy

Oh, in how gender twist bending. Yeah.

Neil

Yeah. Like where you think we had a lo we had Alok Vaid Menon on the show. Um, and we've talked a bit about gender with Daniels as well, and it's like, this is a conversation I'm not up to speed on. So I always take the advantage if I talk to someone, you know, tell me more about what you're exploring in your relationship, but also maybe what, you know, where we need to push.

Timothy

Well, you know, it's interesting with me and my, my girlfriend, my lovely, beautiful, talented girlfriend, Tina, we, you know, we're a couple's therapy. Uh, and it's very much about, um, listen, we're, all of us are different. Relationships are hard. Um, I think we've been kind of taught that, you know, as men, especially like, you know, cis het white men, especially like to not, you know, therapy is weak. Crying is weak. Boys should, you know go and play football and talk about war and all of this shit, and, you know,

Neil

Those are the two big ones, you mentioned therapy and crying. Those are huge. I, I have little boys and I, I want them to see me cry, but I don't cry. I don't, I don't hardly ever let myself cry. So whenever I cl close, I'm like, I'm crying, I'm crying. You should cry too, because I feel like even traumatically, I'm holding it in for them. But, you know, you open those things up in your writing and in your poetry and So it's nice.

Timothy

Not, I mean, I mean, that's how I, you know, you asked me specifically about my relationship. I cry. I'm not afraid to cry. Uh, you know, my girlfriend cries too, but I am, the more I am the more sensitive person in this relationship, um, you know, she is, she is kind of, uh, I don't wanna say she's kind of more masked or something, but it's just, I, I just am more sensitive in that sense, you know? Um, and we're learning a lot in couples therapy about, about these kind of things that it's, you know, it's really beautiful.

Neil

When does a, when does a couple know if they need couples therapy? Leslie and I are not in couples therapy, but you know how, what questions to ask to know if you need it or should, should, what were you, was this the first time for both of you in couples therapy?

Timothy

Uh, yeah. I've never been in couples therapy. I've been in therapy for, you know, on and off for 12 years

Neil

Yeah. I've been in therapy for actually exactly 12 years too.

Timothy

Oh, yeah,

Neil

Yeah, yeah. Yeah. Although I'm a new, I'm on a new therapist.

Timothy

Mm. That's hard.

Neil

That's very hard. My, my other therapist retired. After 10 years.

Timothy

Wait, really, tired of you?

Neil

No retired.

Timothy

Oh retired

Neil

<laugh>, <laugh> stopped working.

Timothy

I, I thought you said they were just tired. They were like, listen.

Neil

Well, he did say many times like, I don't know if you want to keep coming back. You know, I'm supposed to like kind of turn you back to the system, you know?

Timothy

Yeah. <laugh>. Um, how does a couple know? I don't know. You know, I, I think that's, it's hard for me to say how to speak for anybody else. Um, I know, I know a lot of couples who go to couples therapy and nothing on the surface is wrong. You know? Um, it's just kind of a, a need to be proactive.

Neil

Yeah. Uh, that's how Leslie and I think of therapy. I think they're every, everyone should be in therapy.

Timothy

Yeah. Of, of course. Same I agree.

Neil

And couple's therapy, you know, that's should, that's a question for you. Should every couple be a couple's therapy? I like I, what made you guys go? What made you guys start to think about it?

Timothy

You know, I think that we, we are a little bit, you know, we're in different places in our lives and different ways, you know, in, in the sense of like, so I just think that there was some, we had, you know, there were some things that we are kind of talking about interpersonally that I think we weren't quite sure, we weren't quite aligned about. Not like any major things, just about like personality things and ways we deal with stress and ways to not put that on to each other, uh, which can be so easy, you know? And yeah, it's, it is tricky because obviously being in love, being in, in a serious committed relationship, um, your partner has direct access to your wounds, you know? And that is not easy to navigate and no one should think that it is. Um, and so having a professional and having a safe space, safe space to kind of discuss this with, with the, um, professional mental healthcare worker is just really important, you know, for,

Neil

Oh man, your partner has direct access to your wounds. Wow

Timothy

Right?

Neil

Yeah. Leslie and I, you know, on the stress thing, early in our relationship, we realized that when we're stressed, uh, we both need energy. Her way to, to do that is to try to turn to me for extra help in sort of therapeutizing stuff. And my way to get energy is to conserve my energy. So I'm like, I'm like unavailable.

Timothy

Yeah.

Neil

You know, so we're doing, we're doing the same thing, but we're doing it totally in a different way. And so we had to, now we've learned how to navigate that, to call that out, to discuss it.

Timothy

Yeah. In my relat, Tina and I, when it comes to having any sort of conflict, even the smallest way my, you know, I have, so I have like a, you know, an attachment disorder, you know, given, uh, my family and stuff and, and some traumas from childhood. So my, my, you know, kind of go-to is to, to latch on and wanna, and kind of wanna like, talk about the issue like immediately. And I can be a little like overbearing and she, her part of her trauma is to, is to, uh, kind of get away and to not deal with it right away. And to, you know, and to, um, she, she just needs more time to process.

Neil

I I'm, I'm like her. I'm like her and you're like my wife.

Timothy

Yeah.

Neil

And yeah.

Timothy

Yeah. And then that can, then, that creates a conflict.

Neil

Yeah.

Timothy

Because then I'm like, why aren't you, why don't you wanna talk to me about it?

Neil

We gotta figure this out right now. I don't wanna go five more minutes without this hanging, you know? And the person's like, I need three days to think about it.

Timothy

And then I'm kind of like, well, does that mean you don't love me? Does that mean that, you know, we're not like, so then it, it triggers all these other things that have nothing to do with the relationship. It just has to do with your own baggage. And yeah.

Neil

I'm so grateful to you for your openness. You know, I read that, um, I'll, I'll kind of transfer, transition our conversation now. Cause I, I do really, really want to talk about Chronicles volume one by Bob Dylan.

Timothy

Bob Dylan baby.

Neil

Bob Dylan baby. Published in 2004 by Simon and Schuster. You know, I have the book. I found it in a used bookstore in downtown Toronto. Mm-hmm. I've got a white hard cover. It's like, it's like totally white. The back's just like a black and white portrait of the young Dylan, uh, christened Robert Allen Zimmerman when he was born, uh, you know, in 1942. And the front picture is like a black and white kind of times square, like fluorescent neon lights of almost a cliché stereotype of like a boy in the foreground, like looking out <laugh>. Um, yeah. So really what this is, is like this guy's memoir written in here. You can tell he wrote it. And this guy won the Nobel Prize of Literature.

Timothy

The only singer songwriter musician to ever win that prize.

Neil

Wow. I didn't know that.

Timothy

Oh, yeah. No, no one's even.

Neil

Have you watched the announcement of that prize on, on Wikipedia?

Timothy

It's incredible. No, you mean the, his, yeah, his speech. It's like 26 minutes.

Neil

No, no, not his speech were, they were this like, kinda like, you know, woman in another language, like pops into like a party room. Oh yeah. And like the whole tuxedo crowd is like, what the heck? Like, they're like really happy, but they're like so confused that Bob Dylan just won the Nobel, they thought it was gonna be like Alice, you know, Alice Munroe or something. Right. Yeah. So tell us about your relationship. Oh, by the way, 7 8 2.42. Everybody, you guys can file this one under art slash music slash vocal music. So where does, where does your relationship with Bob Dylan and Chronicles kind of sew into your relationship with moving to New York, your work and art and genius work and, and your style work and these relationships we're talking about that we've opened up with, with 40 days of dating and, and kind of, you know, oh, so then, you know, take us into Bob Dylan and all of this.

Timothy

Well, Bob Dylan, this and this book is, you know, one of the main reasons I decided to have the courage to leave Ohio and move to New York City and become an artist and to go after being an artist, you know, and reading about his journey. In 1962, coming from Minnesota, um, feeling like he was destined. And he taught, he, he says that word, um, you know, to do all the things he felt like he could do.

Neil

His, his visualization was so deep that he like, knew it was gonna happen.

Timothy

Oh, yeah. It's wild. And, you know, Bob Dylan once said something like, artists, um, must always be in a state of becoming. And as long as you can kind of stay in that realm, you'll sorta kind of be all right. You know what I mean? And that's something that has carried with me because I'm an expressionist. You know, I don't, I'm an artist. I'm an illustrator, I'm a muralist. I'm an author. I write, I write on Instagram, I write books, I write on walls, but I know I do these social experiments

Neil

Expressionism

Timothy

I'm an expressionist

Neil

Expressionist?

Timothy

Yeah. I do these social experiments. I just have to get Yeah. The things inside out. And they come out in all kinds of different forms. And I need to talk about what it means to be a human, you know, the human condition and how, what it means to be trying to navigate this life in, in all this. And I think, you know, Bob Dylan is a big inspiration for me in that way because he, I think he's done the same. And also what it means for an artist to, um, to stay, uh, you know, afloat for 60 years. Like him still making albums that are getting nominated for Grammys in his eighties. You know, uh, you know, constantly feeling the need to make and put work out into the world and touch people. Uh, that longevity is really inspiring to me now as I, you know, as of now, I'm, you know, 12, 13, 14, 15 years into my career. Um, so yeah, Bob Dylan means everything to me. I have a tattoo and on my leg, <laugh>

Neil

Can you show us the tattoo?

Timothy

Uh, I have pants on. So

Neil

Where, where on your leg is it?

Timothy

It's like above my, it's like above my knee on my thigh.

Neil

Oh. Like, and, uh, you got a thigh tattoo? Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. Wow. And

Timothy

So I have a lot of tattoos. I have like 25 tattoos.

Neil

No, but what's the Dylan tattoo of? Is it of Dylan?

Timothy

Yeah. It's like, well, it's my friend, um, Mira Mariah, Girl Knew York at Girl Knew York on Instagram. She's an incredible tattoo artist. Um, she has a very specific style, um, that I love. She's giving like,

Neil

Girl in New York. That's

Timothy

Girl Knew York. Girl Knew York. But New York is spelled with an like a K like knew, like K N E W, Knew York.

Neil

Okay.

Timothy

Um,

Neil

We'll put, we'll put the handle in the show notes at three Books Co.

Timothy

Yeah. And, uh, it's very much her style, but it's a, it's, it's Bob Dylan, the specific 1960, uh, like April, 1966, Bob Dylan with, with the kind of iconic hair and the long fingernails and smoking a cigarette. Um, but, uh, yeah, man, he's, he's gone. You know, there's so many, if you know anything about Dylan, there's just like so many, there's these moments, it's like, oh, there's the folk Bob Dylan for three years. And then there was the Rock and Roll Bob Dylan for only like two years, year and a half. And then there was like, kind of the, the country Bob Dylan after that. And then there was the, you know, the 1970s kind of like revised version of Bob Dylan back. And then there was the Christian years of Bob Dylan. And then there was the really bad years in the eighties. And then there was, you know, then he kind of like came, he was re reborn again in his like, late fifties, uh, in the mid nineties. And, um, was pretty gone strong ever since then. So,

Neil

Wow Uh,

Timothy

There's just all these versions and I think about that as an artist. Like, you know, um, it's very easy to get pigeonholed, and it's very easy to find yourself without even knowing you're doing it kind of appealing to an audience, appealing to, you know, your clients or whatever. And, um, there's more, there's more for us, you know

Neil

What percent of what you do is what you do? Can you just tell us, for people listening, like what percent is like, uh, corporate murals, what percent is like speaking what percent is um, what percent is like just drawing for like, how do you think about that? Like, I, for me, it's like, I can tell you it's like this much podcasting, this much blogging, this much, speaking this much..You know, is that something you even think about when you try to carve out yourself or your life as a, as an expressionist? How do you keep the feel and fire balance in, you know, accordance?

Timothy

I wish I knew. If you haven't, if anyone has any answers, let me know. <laugh>. Cause it's, it's difficult, man. You know, there's times where you find yourself burning out and you have to, you know, so much of my, my, my new book, I Always Think It's Forever, um, uh, is off that book is off the heels of a year that I, in 2018, that I was severely depressed and burned out from grinding myself into the, into the floor for so long working,

Neil

You're doing mrals for, for Ace, for Ace Hotels, McDonald's. You're doing like all these huge corporations you're on, you're doing Patriot Act with Hassan Minaj. You're doing like, uh, you're doing, you're doing crazy stuff on your social media. Like, just even keeping those little videos up is like full-time job. You're like, Casey Neistat, you know,

Timothy

I don't know about that, but

Neil

<laugh>, but you're like hardcore on your videos. Like, your videos are awesome, you know? Mm-hmm. <affirmative> and, and you're, you know, writing a book. And so, you know, you're, yeah. So then what's the cure for that then?

Timothy

There is no fuckin cure, man. It's, you know, it's just like, you gotta try to find your balance and you gotta try to check in with yourself, you know? Mm-hmm. <affirmative>, and you gotta make sure that you're making time for your life. Your personal life. That was, you know, a big thing that I learned, uh, you know, a couple years ago mm-hmm. <affirmative>, um, which is what this book is kind of on the heels of, you know, finally showing up for myself, finally doing things for me. Whether it's going to Paris, trying to learn French, you know, uh,

Neil

The memoir's great, by the way. Your book is great, even just for the perspective of like, a guy in his thirties going to Paris for six months. That alone was really nice. It's a nice, sub plot of your whole relationship side of it.

Timothy

Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. No, it was glorious, you know, and there's a lot of privilege built into that, no doubt. Um, but if you find yourself at a place where you could maybe do that and you could make carve

time out, you could take time away, I would only recommend it, you know? Um, because it, you real, it's, it's, you gotta put things in perspective, right? We're all gonna die. You know, talk about Bob Dylan. He said something, you know, we're all gonna die. Uh, we're just gonna be gone. We're gonna be off the face of the earth. So if you do your face, if you do your work in the face of that, you know, what does that mean? Um, and uh, and that's what, that's what I'm in it for. You know, I wanna connect with people. I wanna, you know, I don't know how I could make a percent, I don't know how I could break up a pie chart percentage. The speaking gigs are great. I don't do, I don't have any big, um, I love public speaking. I love being on stage, but I don't, I don't make that, um, my work is my craft, my art, you know? And that's my, you know, whether it's making this book or putting up a big mural or doing, doing a Nike shoe with Kevin Durant that comes out in three or four weeks.

Neil

Wow

Timothy

I'm very, I can't wait for it to come out.

Neil

Does he know you're a Knicks fan?

Timothy

It, he, I, he probably does whatever. That's okay. I'm a, I'm a huge Kevin Durant fan, and I, of course, I ride for Brooklyn that's

Neil

He's awesome. He's an awesome follow on Twitter.

Timothy

Yeah, yeah, yeah. He does not care. But you know, that, that's my craft, you know, and, and as long as I can kind of continue to make sure I'm staying true to that, then all the other stuff is like, yes, I love speaking. I love traveling in the world and being able to speak at creative conferences. I want to continue to do that, but I don't, I'm not making, I don't, um, I don't wanna make that. Like, that's not, I think a lot of times a lot of artists, what happens is that you get any sort of notoriety in your, your industry and maybe you start getting asked to do podcasts like this and, and speaking gigs and interviews and all these things. And I think a lot of times that becomes then their full-time job. And then you're talking about being, how to be inspiring and how to drive all this creativity, but you're not making anymore. And that's fine. It's really no judgement.

Neil

No, I, I relate to this so much. I always say I'm a writer who speaks, not a speaker who writes. And I, that's not to just judge anyone who values that differently. No, but I, I've held onto that statement in my own brain because there's times I've noticed where I'll go a period of three six, nine months, and I won't have written anything. And that's fine. But then I feel tense and I'm fighting with my wife, and I'm all ornery because I haven't got that part of my art out of me. And that's my fuel. So, you know, I have to write. So

Timothy

You have to honor it. You have to

Neil

I have to. That's my medicine. Yeah. You know, so if you don't, if you go out of balance, you also get sick.

Timothy

<laugh>, I feel really, yeah. I feel really sensitive to that, you know? And I think that I, and so much of like what happened to me in 2000, like, I was doing a lot of that for a while. And I, and I've kind of flipped the breaks on that. I mean, now I'm doing it because I'm trying to, I'm promoting a book, uh, that I'm very excited about, you know? Of course. But, um,

Neil

I Always Think It's Forever.

Timothy

I Always Think It's Forever. A love story set in Paris as told by an unreliable, but earnest narrator. So as you can sort of stay true to that, you know, I think, we'll, we'll all be okay. But, um, it's, it's tough. You know? It's tough.

Neil

Well,

Timothy

But that's, that push and pull is, it's also part of the journey. And what's interesting, you're

Neil

You're talking about speaking, you're talking about speaking Timothy, it makes me think of your pin tweet. Cuz on the top of your Twitter, you got a pin tweet from 2018. It says something like, um, yeah, don't invite me to speak at your design conference anymore unless you're committed to making it inclusive. Will other white designers who get asked to speak a lot make this a requirement too?

Timothy

Yeah.

Neil

So there's another element to what you're talking about in terms of the balance of your life, is that you're trying to also really honor, it's almost like you're shouting your values. Like you're kind of like values led as opposed to even craft led perhaps.

Timothy

Mm mm I never thought about it that way. You're really good, man. You're really good at this.

Neil

Thanks, brother. I, I just really

Timothy

No, just you doing, you're doing your research. Like just you doing your research, just like, you know, I just, I just wanted to give you your flowers, right? <laugh>.

Neil

No, I, I, that means a lot coming from you. Cause I know you take your craft very seriously. I think podcasting is a craft man. I suck at it compared to Dax Shepard or Rich Roll, you know? Uh,

Timothy

I don't think so, I don't think you should say that

Neil

Or Mel Robbins, but, but here's the thing, here's the thing. I like what I do, and I like how I do it <laugh>. So, you know, there you go. That's, that works for me. Everyone says, make your podcast daily, five minutes a day. Well, I, I release on the lunar calendar, man, and on the lunar calendar, I release two hour long conversations, like Yeah, yeah, yeah. It's totally opposite of what you're supposed to do.

Timothy

<laugh>.

Neil

You know, everyone releases their podcast Monday morning, Thursday night, Monday, you know, my thing comes out like Tuesday at 4:30 AM it's like totally screwed up. <laugh>. No, it doesn't fit into anyone's life.

Timothy

Yeah, yeah, yeah. <laugh>, you gotta go at your own speed. You gotta do it the way you need to do it.

Neil

Well, talking about values, Dylan was very values led. He was asked about his values when, when, you know, in the sixties

Timothy

Yeah.

Neil

About his relationship with his family. And he said, he said, um, I don't have any relationship with my family. Um, and even in 1950, he said, I don't have any family, even though he had a family, he just, he just said, I don't have a family, I don't have a relationship with him.

Timothy

Well, he, he also said something, oh, sorry, keep going.

Neil

No no, well, I was gonna say that in your book, you have this apology to your mom for not having kids. And I was curious to examine both of your relationships with your family, how you think about that.

Timothy

Well, you know, I was gonna say, Dylan said something like, uh, uh, you know, sometimes you're not even, you're not born to the right parents, and sometimes you're not born in the right place. So, you know, he, he was on his way home. Uh, he, you know, and so it's interesting to think about that.

Neil

His dad was like a salesman in Minnesota who died young. His mom was a housewife. Uh, they had a great relationship apparently later in his life. And, uh, you know, he said it wasn't anything personal, but maybe the vision was so strong that it just differed from his past. Even changed his name. Yeah,

Timothy

Yeah. Exactly.

Neil

He wasn't Robert Zimmerman.

Timothy

No. Yeah. And I do, I do think that that is such an interesting idea to keep afloat in your head. You know, this idea that like, you can constantly recreate yourself. And that's, that's good. That's okay. You can do anything you want. Like, you know.

Neil

So what's your vision? What's your vision now?

Timothy

Right now I'm interested in my personal life. You know, I'm interested in being, um, a good partner to my girlfriend. I'm interested in being a better son, trying to reestablish and reaffirm, uh, friendships. You know, these are the things I'm interested in right now, to be honest with you. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. Um, because my grandmother's dying of dementia right now, and I'm was very, very close with her growing up. She's one of the whole reasons I'm an artist. She was an artist. She is an artist. And, uh, it's, you know, it's, it's wild to see someone kind of just dissolve in front of you over the course of two years. Um, and, uh, you know, you're kind of mourning. You're a former version of herself, you know, and I'm in a lot of ways, you know, I was just, I posted something on Instagram and on Twitter recently about how I'm mourning because of the pandemic, how it's taken years from us.

Timothy

I'm mourning versions of myself, you know, that I don't even know. Now, suddenly we're about to be in 2023, and it's like, what the fuck? It was just January, 2020. Like, what, what am I supposed to be doing? What is the world what, cuz there's this constant demand to produce. Like, we didn't just all go through this collective trauma together, you know? And meanwhile, real shit ishappening. You know, people are being murdered in Iran, you know, there's anti-Semitism all over this country. There's, you know,

Trump's running again. It, it just doesn't stop, you know? And, and it's like you're mad because you're seeing too much of it, and then you're mad if people aren't talking about it. And then you're just, it's, it's just, there's no way out. So, man, I don't know. You know, I don't know. I don't have, I'm not working on anything.

Neil

Why don't you go live in the forest

Timothy

Then? No, I'm not saying I'm going up the grid.

Neil

No, no. I think that's what we should do, <laugh>. I really do. I mean, I, I'm not, I'm telling my kids no phones till you're 18. I'm like, don't you want to protect, like what little self sense of ourself we have left?

Timothy

No, for sure. But at the same time, I don't want to go disappear in the forest because I'm also, I gotta be here to fight if I, you know, and I don't mean that in a literal sense, but, you know, as an artist, um, you know, Keith Haring said something about he's a big influence of mine. You know, like the point of making art is to communicate, is to contribute to culture. It's to talk about this shit. Um, it's to take these things and, and mirror it back to society. And so, um, you know, as people marginalized people are being, um, harmed all over this country and this world. Um, you know, it's just, uh, I'm not, I'm not in, I'm not gonna, I don't want to just go disappear. And, you know, it's, it's tough. It's just like, there's just, it's really unfortunate and, uh, everything's going, you know, everything just with the pandemic.

Timothy

And like I said, like kind of this feeling of like mourning former versions of myself and this demand to produce, to produce, to produce. You know, it's just like, I just, you know, going back to the, the, the Who's Gonna Take the Weight, the Kevin Powell book, you know, one of the things that I still think about with that book is he really examines media, um, through the lens of, you know, how like the layers that are happening underneath what we're seeing, you know, um, how and how we should be questioning them and looking at them through the lens of race and gender, uh, and, uh, different kind of societal structures. And I think you're, nowadays, because of social media, everything is being thrown in our face. And there's this constant fight about the news, what's real, what's fake. You know, how we're consuming media these days. Even how, like, you know, TikTok has changed the way we're putting out content. Um, and the way we're telling stories.

Neil

Everything's nine seconds now.

Timothy

Yeah, exactly. And I just hope that we can all be objective and that we can all really be critical about the way we're, we're kind of taking in this media that's constantly penetrating us, um, through these different lenses. Because for someone like me who does have extreme privilege in this, in this country,

um, it's important for me, you know, as an artist to kind of, I we're in the business of a consequence. You know, what you put out matters. And it's, it's not every, all art is political in the way I, I see it. Everything I do is political in that sense. If I write something on a, on a wall on the streets, um, and I don't understand, if I'm not looking at it from 30 different ways and I'm offending someone, well, I'm part of the problem then, you know? Um, and I don't know what my point is. I just felt like I, well,

Neil

No, no, no. I, I actually, I actually, I actually love it. I love it a lot. And the reason I love it is because I totally get that sense from you. And not to bring it back to this, but

Timothy

The values,

Neil

Well, the values, like on your, you know, not many people, I'm, I'm speaking, I'm giving a lot of speeches. I know a lot of people who are giving a lot of speeches. A lot of our mutual friends are giving a lot of speeches. I don't know anyone else who's being as bold and declarative about you as saying if, if your lineup is, uh, white people, I'm not coming. That's pretty. That's pretty. Have you had much like what

Timothy

I, I've had push back. I've had people, I've told that the people have asked me to speak and you know, people have tried to explain that, you know, this region or that region there, you know, it's, it's just about talent. The old, you know, the old adage and well, we're not looking at who these people are

Neil

That's really what they say.

Timothy

They still say that kind of stuff generally, you know,

Neil

I thought, I thought you were gonna say, they're saying we only wanna have one speaker and it's you. Or like, we only have two speakers.

Timothy

Oh no well, that's different. If I'm just being asked to speak by myself, it's, but if I'm asked to speak with on a lineup or on a panel Yeah. Then yeah, yeah. Also, also just for the lack of like, don't we want different pers like world perspectives and like, just, just just textures to a whole, to people's experiences.

Neil

Yeah, yeah, yeah,

Timothy

You know, don't we want to hear that and be like, ingratiated in that more? It's just wild how you're still, you know, so Yeah. But we're in the business of consequence, man. You write a book and put it out, you know, it matters.

Neil

You know, who had hard and firm and strong values like you and Bob Dylan, you know, who did Miss Ayn Rand

Timothy

<laugh> in a very, in a very different way.

Neil

And so you're gonna, I want you to tell us about the Fountainhead now.

Timothy

Oh my God. The Fountainhead

Neil

Which by the way, is not a new book for our top 1000, cuz you're joining Tim Urban who writes the book, who writes the blog, Waitbutwhy.com. And, uh, Adam Grant, the, uh, Wharton professor, um, he also picked the Fountainhead as well as did really chip as, as did Chip Wilson, the founder of Lululemon.

Timothy

Ah,

Neil

And a lot of these guys also picked and Mark Manson of The Subtle Art of Not Giving a Fuck. He also picked Atlas Shrugged. So you're, you're, I'm just to throw, not to say you're on a panel of all white guys, man, but you're on a panel I know of all white guys here.

Timothy

Yeah. But did all these guys pick the book with, um, good graces in mind? I mean, were they all like

Neil

No, no, no. Nobody still likes it.

Timothy

Okay. Okay. Got it. Got it. Yeah. Cool. Yeah. Cool. Yeah, I mean, I think it's one of those,

Neil

And I'm, I'm, I'm putting myself on that camp too. I'm a recovering objectivist

Timothy

So you were an objectivist?

Neil

Well I really, I, I never declared myself to be that, but when I was 16, I read the Fountainhead. I thought it was life changing. I recommended it to everybody. I even have my tattered paper back here with the list of names that I can't of like, you know, incredible people who've read this book. Number one, Neil Pasricha, number two, Sharon Imison, the pharmacist I worked with. Number three, Arlene Stratton, friend of mine in high school. Yeah. And like, I made a list of people I like, I was a disciple.

Timothy

You. Wow. That's incredible. Cuz uh, the way I learned about the book was from someone like you, very enthusiastic, someone who bought me the book, bought me the book and gave it to me, wrote an entire, just like, gave, wrote a whole note inside the book. I still have it. Uh, uh, this kid, I grew up with a fr an old friend, <laugh>. He gave me the book.

Neil

Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait. We can bleep out his name. But why'd you laugh when you said it? Like, what was the, what's the, what's the relationship or the memory of this guy? Who's the Ayn Rand, you know, evangelist in your life?

Timothy

He, he was like the kid. Okay. He, he was like, we growing up, I don't know if you ever had this experience, but there's like, you know, generally as teenagers, especially my camp, we were up to no good. We were just smoking weed, cutting classes, having fun, like part, you know, we were just, and you're generally most teenagers, I think, you know, you're going to Three Eleven concerts and shit, whatever it was like, we were, we were, we were liberal kids. Like, you know what I mean? I, we didn't think about the world politics and the, and the, you know, we didn't think about US imperialism and like, you know, we weren't thinking about like, uh, you know, uh, I just, I didn't, I didn't know about, you know, I just didn't think about these anything. So he was like this 16, 17 year old kid who was already a Republican. Like, he was like, you know what I mean? He was already like yelling about like, uh, you know, it migrants and you know, like,

Neil

Wow

Timothy

Like watching Bill O'Reilly.

Neil

Yeah. Oh wow. Yeah.

Timothy

Really like pro capitalist, like, you know mm-hmm. <affirmative> and, you know, he came, he was very privileged kid. His, his, his dad owned a very successful business and you know, he was

Neil

His dad probably talked politics a lot, him at the kitchen table or whatever

Timothy

Probably yeah. And so, so here's this kid, you know, and I was, uh, you know, so I, when I graduated high school and I started taking, I was painting houses and I started taking community college classes and he became, looking back, I was like his little project, cuz we had, we would have fun, we would smoke weed together. But he had all these opinions about the world and I was still just trying to figure out who the hell I was. And he, we would meet and smoke. And I was fascinated. He was like very com you know, he is very kind of rambunctious about it all. And, um, very charismatic and could make a very compelling case about all these things. And I would watch John Stewart and then I would watch Bill O'Riley to try to get like these different point of views.

Neil

That's pretty, that's a pretty enlightened perspective to have in the late nineties. Like just to know, but you were aware that you were getting a slant even.

Timothy

Yeah, for sure. For sure

Neil

That's, that's kind of right when the news was turning into like divisive news.

Timothy

Exactly. Yeah, yeah, yeah. It was like right in, in the early days of that

Neil

Fox News heyday.

Timothy

Um, and so here he was like, and I'm taking art classes and he, you know, gives me this book as a gift when I'm about to move to New York, uh, and says, you know, Howard Rourke great artist, the architect, this might be your journey. You know?

Neil

Wow. Wow.

Timothy

And he gives me this book.

Neil

That is a lot of love there.

Timothy

No, it was a lot of love for sure. Uh, even though, you know, I disagree with this man about just about everything politically. Um, uh, so I read this book and I had a lot of issues with the book, but it was

obviously in some ways as an artist inspiring to think about how you can, um, potentially, uh, keep quote, unquote integrity in your work. Uh, which I think is, uh, also kind of bullshit because like, I encourage all artists to make money if they can because we're not a punk band. You know, like, um, you know, there's no such for, to me, there's no such thing as selling out unless it goes, you're only selling out if you're going, if you're going against your own personal values and morals, you know, or, um, or doing or do doing something that, or aligning yourself with, uh, some sort of corporation that is, um, obvi, uh, like outwardly and obviously racist or sexist or homophobic or something, uh, that is selling out. Um, but otherwise get your back, make your money. You know what I mean? Like,

Neil

And, and elevate and elevate the work we're, elevate the work we're doing. If I may be so bold to say Yeah. You know, like, like I, I try to buy from artists and support artists and support art, and I, I apply that even to things like independent bookstores and even things like, you know? Like, like, you know, you, your money is your vote, and so mm-hmm. <affirmative>, you want, you want artists to make money and you wanna be paying artists. You don't you wanna, we wanna live in a society where we do have independent bookstores. They're sort of gonna rent here because they pay taxes to the local municipality that plants the flowers in our parks.

Timothy

Yeah, yeah. Mm. You know? Yeah.

Neil

See, you read this book, you're moving to New York, but you're not Howard Rourke. You disagree with objectivism, which is, I think you could say it's like a laissez faire, capitalistic view of the world, right? Like, it's like, no, government does nothing except police kind of thing. And it's typically enamoring to people of your, of that age. You read it, but you had an opposite reaction and maybe it altered your value that the other way.

Timothy

Well, I just, you know, I, I had a, I I already knew in a sense that this idea that I am my own hero and nothing else matters like this Howard Roarke character, you know? And that only thing that matters is your work, um, for the sake of the work. Something just didn't feel like, again, it goes back to that thing I said about, you know, being an artist, making art is, is is a, a means to communicate and contribute to society and culture. And I don't mean just in some, uh, egotistic way in that word, you know, that stuff is used a lot in the fountainhead, uh, egoism. Yeah. It's like, no, it's actually more people like, how are you bringing value to people's lives? You know? Yeah. Yeah. And not to get all on like a soapbox about it, because it's like everything is subjective, but it's like, are you, are you thinking about the communities of the people that you're creating work for? You know? And that's, and that's what it's about, you know? And it's not just, well, this is my art and you must under respect it, and if you don't, you're stupid. You're an idiot. It just feels really shallow to me.

Neil

Have I asked you how you define express expressionist?

Timothy

No. I don't know how I ex uh, defined it. I think I define it. Uh, we have, as artists, we have this, this, this, this fire inside that you have to get out and you have to find a way to get it out and put it out in the world. And that's all it is. You know?

Neil

So is that, is that your definition of an artist? An artist is somebody with, with a fire inside who has to get it out?

Timothy

Yeah.

Neil

Wow.

Timothy

Yeah. But I think it has to come out in some sort of, uh, tangible form. I don't know. There, there's a lot of con conversation about what a creator is these days mm-hmm. Because of social media,

Neil

Or even a creative.

Timothy

Yeah. Yeah. And a writer, a visual artist, a filmmaker, a musician, you know, someone who is creating something that, that I can, that lives by itself, that then I can carry and hold and has its own meaning to me, despite what it meant to the actual artist who, who created it. Um, I think that that kind of, uh, transition or something is important and what it, and how we define art or create, uh, creativity these days. I don't think it's necessarily, uh, fashion of course plays into that, but I don't know if it's just taking pictures of yourself.

Neil

Wow. I'm like emotionally stunned by a lot of what you're talking about. And I, I, my heart goes to a place where it wants to go deeper, and I'm also wanting to wrap things up. So I'm, I'm, I'm wanting to close things off and cuz I, we like to close conversations here and you've been very generous with your heart today. And I really, really, I feel that and I really appreciate it. And we like to close things off. You know, it's a books podcast. We, we call the people who listen to the show book lovers, writers, makers sellers and librarians and, um, you know, I, I can't recommend, I Always Think It's Forever Enough, you know, really what I love about this graphic novel that you've created or graphic, do you call it a graphic novel?

Timothy

Graphic memoir.

Neil

Graphic Memoir. That's a better, that's a better, uh mm-hmm. <affirmative>. Yeah. You put it, you know, you might wanna put it in a category with like, uh, um, Adrian Tomine. Well, he's, he's more fiction or, or I don't know. What's the graphic memoir? Maus, I guess, or Persepolis, those type of things.

Timothy

Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. Mm-hmm.

Neil

<affirmative>. Okay. Okay.

Timothy

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Neil

Or even like the guy, um, who does like Pyongyang and Jerusalem and you know, those ones. Yeah. Like the kinda like travel memoirs. Um, but yours is a travel mom, a travel graphic memoir,

Timothy

Travel through the heart.

Neil

Yeah, yeah, yeah. It's beautiful. I recommend everybody pick it up. So to close things off, we've got some fast money round questions for you.

Timothy

Oh my gosh.

Neil

Number one, hard cover paperback audio or e?

Timothy

Hard cover always.

Neil

Why?

Timothy

I don't know, there's just like, "ain't nothing like the real thing, baby". It, you know, like, this is a hard cover. That's what it was made for. I like the thing I, you know, I want, it's the reason I drink black coffee. It's the reason I drink black tea. It's the reason I either drink just, uh, red wine or whiskey, you know, straight. Like, I'm just that kind of person. Hard cover, <laugh>

Neil

Genuine.

Timothy

Yeah.

Neil

It's what a book is. When we talk about a book jacket, when we talk about a book linen, when we talk about book design, when we talk about a book cover, all those terms are about hard covers. They're all about hard covers. The flap, the

Timothy

Yeah, exactly. I was a book jacket designer

Timothy

It was my first job we made. We designed book jackets. It was made for the hard cover first. I want what it was made for.

Neil

Oh. How do you organize your books on your bookshelf?

Timothy

Um, I like some idea of like a messy organi organization. I want it to look like it was kind of not meant to be that way, but it's like too perfect to not have been kind of curated that way.

Neil

I I, it's kind of like the messy hair look, the purposely messy hair look. Yeah. You know, like the, like when the friends guys first started doing that, it was like, oh, they're like making it look messy. Yeah. But it's really, it's really, you know, it's like a hundred dollars haircut,

Timothy

You know, <laugh>. Yeah, that's how I like

Neil

So, so when I go to your bookshelf, like, so I get that that's the aesthetic. Now how are you actually lumping the books together then?

Timothy

Uh, one part, uh, it needs to be practical of course to get a lot of books. But then there's also an, uh, there has to be a form of, um, presentation, you know? And, you know, so I like to,

Neil

Um, is your books, is your bookshelf like right there? Can you show me with the camera?

Timothy

No, this is, this is just, um, there's just art books here.

Neil

Okay. Okay.

Timothy

Um, but at home, you know, with all my books, it's like, I like to have like, I'll have some in a row stacked, um, uh, horizontally and then, or horizontally and then some stacked vertically. And then I'll have like one or two, like my Albin Ludwig cover like, you know, these covers that are kind that I, that I love that kind of like, you know, sitting out. Um, yeah.

Neil

And, uh, do you have a favorite bookstore living or dead?

Timothy

Uh, you know, honestly, like, I just love McNally Jackson here in New York. Um, it was a bookstore that when I was in design school that I always went to and looked at all the cool, they have a lot of cool art books. Uh, I love going and looking just at who creates, you know, has all the new books and memoirs and stuff. And I'm looking at like, who designed the book jackets? Uh, cuz that's, you know, the, that's a kind of an old, I was a book jacket designer, my first job at first time. Are

Neil

Are you, are you like a chip kid fan, gray318?

Timothy

Of course, yeah, all

Neil

Gray Gray318 did the Book of Awesome.

Timothy

He, oh really? He's in London, right?

Neil

Yeah, yeah,

Timothy

Yeah, yeah, yeah. That's amazing.

Neil

Yeah, he also did like, you know, all the Jonathan Saffron four books.

Timothy

Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Neil

And he did, you know, he, he's like a, I got very lucky cuz what happened was my book was supposed to be called The Other Side of the Pillow till Pub in the catalog with a pillow on the fucking cover <laugh>. And at the last second, my editor, the genius, Amy Einhorn, she was like, no, it's called The Book of Awesome.

Timothy

Hmm.

Neil

And, and she was right and she got the designer and she hired this awesome designer. And you know what, like,

Timothy

Oh, I know the cover

Neil

Like that, that I've written. I've written 10 books, man. Um, nothing will ever sell. What? This is the, this is the one thing. This is the, it's this, this is my big book

Timothy

No man. Shout out to Gray318. Incredible. Yeah. But Rodrigo Corral, I don't know who you know, he is?

Neil

No, no. Gimme that's why I want your names. Right. I wanna, I wanna follow these people on Instagram.

Timothy

Well, I don't, you know, I'm a little like behind on like all the new up and comer ones, but Rodrigo Corral was always a big hero of mine. He's a friend. He's done, yeah, he's done so many books, you know, like from Fight Club to like just

Neil

Yeah, yeah

Timothy

Just stuff that's just penetrated culture. Um, yeah, Paul Sayer was a big hero of mine. He does like a lot of, he's done all kinds of stuff. Um,

Neil

That's cool. Yeah. We'll put all these links at the, at the show notes. Um, and, and keep, if you have more, email me after, like, I'd love to get a list for people. Yeah. Because you know what I, how often do you get to geek out about book cover designers? Yeah. You know, that's what this show's all about

Timothy

By the way, I did the cover, I did the cover of my new book, I Always Think It's Forever. All, every single piece of this book was created by me. <laugh>. Yeah. <laugh>.

Neil

Well, no, I, I, I guess I know that cause that's your stuff, but like the cover I just, the publishers, did they give you like a, uh, a, a proposal?

Timothy

No, no, no, no. It was all I give them the proposal.

Neil

I've been steamrolled on covers before.

Timothy

Oh I've heard, I've heard the horror stories from authors. It's tough. I feel, I feel for you.

Neil

I didn't want there to be a smiley face on The Happiness Equation. And I got, they said, well, we're happy. I said, who wants a frickin smiley face on the cover? You know? But Yeah. But they, they went with it anyway. And, um, you know, for anyone who's a potential writer, the truth of the matter is you don't have final say as the writer typically. And if you are an artist like Timothy, you may be fortunate enough that you get to do it. I know Austin Kleon, he's now designing his book covers and his book innards himself cuz he taught himself illustrator. Well, you have a little bit extra power, so it's worth looking into for writers, you know, like take an Adobe Illustrator class or something. <laugh>. Other than the three books we've discussed today, is there any other books you'd like to point our listeners to?

Timothy

Well,

Neil

For any reason

Timothy

I mean, listen, I read more women, read more women. We've talked about a lot of men today. Read Lane Moore's book, How to Be Alone. Read Ashley C Ford's book, Somebody's Daughter, incredible memoir, you know, read Roxane Gay, um, read,

Neil

We've had her on the show

Timothy

Read Debbie Millman, my good friend. Read my friend Mari Andrew, who you know her book, uh, her first book was an incredible smash hit, um, My Inner Sky. Um, you know, that's, that's a graphic memoir

in the same vein as mine. Um, she and I have had a very, um, beautiful friendship for years. And that is really, you know, we really feed off of each other creatively. And I've inspired her. She's inspired me in our work and the way we tell stories through our art. Um, you know, those are the people I'm inspired by.

Neil

Um, and then a final bit of wisdom. You've been so generous with your time today. You've been so generous, uh, you know, with your heart to leave our listeners with, do you have one final hard fought piece of advice that you'd like to close things off with?

Timothy

I would just say the same, the thing I was saying before, you know, like, can you find your, your yourself in a state of becoming, you know, how to as a, as a creative person, as a writer. As an artist

Neil

Oh, that's good. Never heard that before.

Timothy

Yeah,

Neil

And I've never heard you before Un until this conversation and it's been a real gift. So I really wanna say thank you so much for, for doing this.

Timothy

Yeah, it's been a gift for me too. I'm honored that you would have me.