

# Transcript

Wynne Leon

Welcome to the Sharing the heart of The Matter podcast where we celebrate the storyteller in us all.

I'm Wynne Leon, and in this episode, Vicki Atkinson and I are talking with writer, Poet, artist and Blogger Dave Williams. Joy is having Dave Williams come on the podcast to tell us what inspired his recent project to collect and publish what sparks joy in the blogging community. He tells us how he was inspired by the spirit of his Aunt Diane, celebrating her infectious personality after she passed away last summer was one of the motivations behind this project. Another was the idea to strengthen the delight muscle, a suggestion in the book daily Delight by Ross Gay prompted Dave to want to cultivate the same upward spiral. And Dave was also inspired by Terry Pollen's October blogging project that brings the WordPress community together. In the end, they found and shared so much joy in this community project. He compiled, a joy is blank table of contents that we know will inspire you. We're confident you'll love the scenic and beautiful places we explore as we talk about what joy is and how to celebrate that as a community. We know you'll love it. Hey, Dave.

Dave Williams

Hey, how are you Wynne, Vicki? Hi.

Vicki Atkinson

We're good. How are you?

Wynne Leon

Good to see.

Dave Williams

You guys, I mean talking about joy with you guys, this is. This is fantastic.

Wynne Leon

Right. We just were. We were just chatting and I I said we had hit record because we were just, I mean, just the note of joy that we were having through all of our conversation is is just so high, high.

Dave Williams

Yeah, George, is this conversation? Yeah.

Vicki Atkinson

Yes, it is. Yeah. And we were losing good stuff on the cutting room floor. That still the thing.

Wynne Leon

Pistol, I think, yeah.

Vicki Atkinson

I say. Will the youngsters know what that means? Right.

Speaker

Yeah.

Wynne Leon

I think so. So clearly. Dave, we love your project. Joy is.

Speaker

Secret.

Wynne Leon

So good. Tell us about the inspiration for it.

Dave Williams

Well, as first the about the kind of a little bit of background about the project kind of nuts and bolts, which is kind of silly cause nuts and bolts. I mean I wanted to keep it really simple. Know it was joy IZ and then blank. And then. I I threw out when I. Introduced the project on my blog, I said. Here are basically 2 steps you know, fill in the blank joy is whatever that is, it's it could be a word, it could be. A phrase. It could be a sentence. Joy is a. Joy is oranges. What have you? That was a first step, and then the second step is. Provide a little bit. You know something besides just the title? Could be whatever you. I mean, I really want to keep it simple and open-ended of if you want to write a poem, an essay. If your joy is a tree in your neighborhood and you want to send in a photograph of the tree being you know.

Speaker

Not too.

Dave Williams

Fantastic. So it's it was really that. I didn't want to make it overly complicated for for, for me or for other folks too, you know. It's. It shouldn't be pleasantly.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Dave Williams

Now the the inspirations kind of a mix, a blend of stuff. I would say three main ones. A big one is my my Aunt Diane. She's my mom is one of five kids and she's unfortunately my Aunt Diane passed away last summer at the young age. She was 72.

Speaker 2

Hmm.

Dave Williams

And I have such good memories of. And it's it's. She had this playful spirit about her. I mean, she was active.

Speaker

I think.

Dave Williams

Played softball for years and then pickleball. But also you know just that's. Of the other grown-ups, but with kids. She would go out saying to play Carnival games with you, whatever it was. You know she did not want to stand in the background. Wanted to be. Involved in the fun you know of.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Dave Williams

I just if. You know, when I was a kid, she would jump in 'cause. Al grew up in Rahoad Beach. And there's on the boardwalk. There's a it's called fun Land, and there's they have rides and carnival type games. And she would do bring bring us there and she would play those games too. You know, it wasn't like like, oh, you. Have. I'll just stand over on the side. I didn't. She'd be playing right with us, and when I was a kid and and when I have, you know, I have two daughters, and when they were younger and Aunt Diane and her husband Steve would get together sometimes with us. For Easter.

Speaker

And.

Dave Williams

Diane was right there with us dying. Eggs. You know what? So if you think that that I loved that. That spirit about her, I. Wanted to be involved in the fun.

Wynne Leon

Yeah.

Dave Williams

And just thinking about her, a lot about her, you know, since she passed away in the summer and. And this projects in a way kind of felt like remembering her more and honoring her in that faithful spirit. So that was one. Another one was a book I read. Gosh, maybe. Last year, you're maybe two years. I can't remember exactly, but the book is it's called the Book of Delights and it's by Ross Gay.

Speaker

Hmm.

Dave Williams

And I think I saw it on. You know, I follow some book reviewer bloggers and I think one of them I can't. Sorry I can't remember exactly who who mentioned it. I wish I could. But the the idea behind the book is that a project that Ross Gay gave himself. He started his birthday and he said I'm going to notice. One delighted day and it'll go on it purposefully, you know, do not just have this stuff happen accidentally around me and not notice it on purposefully notice one a day and write about it each day for a year. And I think you skip some days and and the book is is a product of that. And in when in the introduction he describes the the project. And he really? Me away with with one thing, he said. Well, several things, but one in particular was that as he started doing this, some somewhere in the beginning he developed what he called a delight muscle. In in meeting and he turned. He he meant that. The more he looked for the lights, the more he noticed.

Wynne Leon

Mm.

Dave Williams

Yeah, it was like he said he had something. I can't remember exactly how he said it, but it was like as if the delights were waving their hands and saying, look over here, look over here, notice me about me, and I get on there.

Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Dave Williams

You know and.

Speaker

He.

Vicki Atkinson

I love that because I often think we. I think it was a professor that said this to me a million years ago. We are what we attend to, you know, especially now when we're trying to sort. Through what's worthy of my time and attention. That's yeah, his delight muscle. And I think Brené Brown describes joy as an upward spiral. Yeah.

Wynne Leon

And whoever.

Speaker 2

Apple.

Wynne Leon

You know, you start to spiral yourself up instead of down, yeah.

Speaker

I really.

Dave Williams

I really like that image.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Wynne Leon

So it it goes well with the delight muscle.

Speaker 2

Wow.

Dave Williams

There you go.

Vicki Atkinson

Yeah, yeah, flex that muscle.

Dave Williams

It's it's. Yeah, you said you know, your your environment didn't. It's just that you opened your eyes and your mind and your. Your horse and you notice those things more.

Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah.

Wynne Leon

Right.

Dave Williams

Yeah, yeah. Really, that, that kind of purposeful looking purposeful.

Wynne Leon

OK.

Dave Williams

I love that you know, as far as, like and it's, you know, and you, you read a book or watch a movie or something and something sticks with you. And that one has stuck with me that that message. Really has.

Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah.

Vicki Atkinson

That's good.

Dave Williams

Satisfaction, inspiration. And there's one more.

Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah.

Dave Williams

I I take you 20 minutes to.

Vicki Atkinson

No, no, no. I'm taking notes.

Speaker

The.

Vicki Atkinson

Is good, yeah.

Dave Williams

Other inspiration was more the format. Because Terry Pollen, who is also on WordPress and she I think in yeah, in October she runs what she calls. Bad bad moon rising. And that's for everyday during the month. October she'll have interviews of writers, and you can. And you know in the in the spirit of the season, they'll be writers of thriller, books of horror stories and so on. And I've done it twice, two years in a row and I've really enjoyed it, not only for. Its really cool to you know show send you some interview questions and you you go through. But it's also just being introduced to other. You know, I've, I've met some great writers through there and like, hey, I didn't know you had a book, and now you have a blog. I'll follow your blog. So that was the that. Really liked that. So I thought well for this.

Speaker

Yes.

Dave Williams

Project The Joy projects. I'll just do. Too, with starting in late January. I will do it every day. Try to. Post every day through January and then through February.

Vicki Atkinson

Yeah, those are like 3 powerful points of. I'm imagining you sitting like having these like a three pronged epiphany. Where the inspiration comes from. But. I wanted to tell you.

Speaker 2

All right.

Vicki Atkinson

I forget what post it was, but what you described about your Aunt Diane, Aunt Diana and her like Joa de Vive, there's an image that you shared of her on her wedding day, jumping on top of your Uncle Stevens car. Right. It's just. It so embodies everything you were describing about just the photo was infectious. Just looking at her in one dimension, so I can only imagine.

Dave Williams

Yeah, that was. My gosh, as far as you know, the pictures that the talk you know have 1000 words that say that.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Dave Williams

Says 1,000,000 because. You know, if you. Seen the picture? It's it's she's in the wedding dress that she made. She's barefoot, and it's right after the wedding ceremony to her husband Steve, and she jumps on his car and she basically says, yeah, this is half my. Now it wasn't done at. Of like, Oh my gosh. Yeah, it wasn't you. It wasn't. Like the Rolls Royce for BMW we're talking about maybe a Honda or something like that. Mr. Yeah, and and this is it's. I you know, it's funny. The the memory thing because I was. This is this is back in 78, so I would have been six years old. I wish I remembered it, you know, but I. But because of the the photo so often I think just like I made-up, you know we hearing.

Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah.

Dave Williams

Story.

Vicki Atkinson

Yeah.

Dave Williams

Photo I think I I've made it made-up a memory more than I actually.

Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah.

Dave Williams

Genuinely remember.

Speaker

It so yeah, but.

Wynne Leon

Powerful. So good, beautiful, beautiful spirit.

Dave Williams

Beautiful moment.

Speaker 2

Oh my gosh.

Vicki Atkinson

Well, so when you started all this and you, you put the thought into it and you. Kind of revealed what your intentions. You know, you got a tremendous response, but were you surprised, you know, how are you feeling about all of that now?

Dave Williams

I feel I feel humbled. You know, I I I didn't have expectations going in of like, oh, you know, this will be really, you know, exciting. And people will take it and run with it and I'll get tons of responses. I didn't have. I had hopes, you know. Part of it was for me and and and I was like, hey, I want to try this joy thing. And if three people reply, so be it. Then I'll have a bunch of my I have silly poems and silly drawings up. Put those up, you know, fun for me.

Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah.

Dave Williams

And just do the response. I think about 20. Both of you guys thank you very much have have supplied posts. They'll just need the gratitude of, you know, when the emails came in and people said, hey, is this still time to?

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker

You know.

Dave Williams

Go. Yes, please. Like I'm not going to.

Vicki Atkinson

Mm.

Dave Williams

It. No, I'm like, I'm not going to. No to. And I'm really, really grateful for it, yeah.

Vicki Atkinson

And bits of momentum too, because I know people who didn't know about it, who were reading things, you know that we wrote about it, you know, enjoying your project and. And a couple of other people were like, well, wait a minute, I want to raise my hand for that too. And all of that is just sort of, yeah, just extra special because you can see kind of the swelling of good stuff, right? Yeah.

Dave Williams

Yeah. And if people told other people about. I I love. You know, I encourage you to to throw in your hat. Cause for me it didn't have to be something new.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Dave Williams

Could be an old blog float. You know if I think that happened a few.

Vicki Atkinson

Yeah.

Dave Williams

Of something a Blogger wrote. Three years ago.

Wynne Leon

Yeah. Yeah. Well, and, you know, there's been so much diversity in it. Know music. Yeah, art, poetry lists. We've got something from your wife, Sue. I mean it just.

Speaker 2

Yes.

Vicki Atkinson

It's and the other Molly. Right from task, right? Yeah.

Wynne Leon

Yeah.

Speaker 2

So good.

Wynne Leon

Yeah, I mean, just so many good. And I mean you left it open enough, as you said was your intention and you boy has that delivered.

Dave Williams

Yeah, I loved. And you know, part of the fun of when seeing posts get published, and then the the 1:00 and you're when you're within WordPress and you can see the published post and there's a list. We'll think. That, as I'm going to publish kind of a table of. Of the. The end and the powerful thing of joy is spending time with.

Speaker 2

Right.

Dave Williams

Joy is you go down this list of joy is joy is. Joy is. It's. It's such a powerful thing.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Dave Williams

There's so many like it could. You know, remembering. I think Kim was one and Nigel did running in, you know, in the rain at 4:00 AM and. Just like all. These different and I I really appreciated the more specific ones of like you know.

Wynne Leon

Mm.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Dave Williams

And so we really need to see that list.

Wynne Leon

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Vicki Atkinson

Like you said, even at like a table of contents level just by including the titles I hadn't thought about that.

Dave Williams

Mm.

Vicki Atkinson

There is inspiration there just at that. Quick take. Yeah, yeah.

Dave Williams

Why won't we? I'll be posting that at the end of OK. Here's a kind of a wrap up. You can see the the power. Of what is so and so?

Wynne Leon

That's so good.

Vicki Atkinson

When will the end be right? If it, it could go on forever, right when?

Speaker

Yeah you could.

Dave Williams

I did put an end date on it as the end of February for at least me posting once a day and I'm almost out of as far as schedules. Or other, you know, post by other people. I'm kind of transitioning to stuff of my own. Look like I said the silly poems and drawings like.

Wynne Leon

Yeah.

Dave Williams

And you know it's it's been. For that too of like if it makes. Smile. That's.

Speaker

Cancel.

Dave Williams

That's a great that's a big bonus for me. So yeah, at the end of February.

Wynne Leon

Yeah. Well, and I love that because I mean, especially your table of contents, I mean, you've done such a good job of creating community with this project and you know, is that sort of an unexpected side benefit for you?

Speaker

Mm.

Dave Williams

Yeah, it it was surprising in that I didn't really. That far ahead. You know why? It's kind of funny to laugh about it now that you know. So that you know in mentioning the Terry Pollen's blog of the Bad

Moon Rising. And that was a community building too, because you see in the comments of people supporting each other like, you know, I really liked.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Dave Williams

Your your answer to this interview question or that and it was and it it kind of like reflected in the Julia's project of people saying great poem, great painting, you know, great. Whatever. And I I really appreciated that.

Speaker 2

Mm.

Dave Williams

But as far as in the beginning I.

Speaker

I.

Dave Williams

Didn't think of it. Know like. We didn't show them.

Wynne Leon

Right.

Dave Williams

Yeah, it's, I've. It's been a great side benefit.

Vicki Atkinson

I think it's hard to know sometimes 'cause you know for non blogging friends that may be tuning in. WordPress is a vast place and I think you know over time we we find our little communities within but.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Vicki Atkinson

You know, I was really struck by meeting some people that know. You know who were kind to me when I posted? And now we're connected. And so, you know, I think there's a little bit of that wanting an endorsement, you know, wanting to trust. But I think you fast tracked that for some people, by easing the introduction by saying bring a little bit of yourself forward. You know that?

Yeah. Was really a very beautiful, unexpected thing. But I think you've connected a lot of people that. Might not have found each other otherwise, or it would have taken a lot longer.

Dave Williams

Yeah, that's that's. Thank you for saying that, 'cause.

Vicki Atkinson

No, it's true.

Dave Williams

It's. You know, it's meeting people in the comments is is a great way to do it of hey, you, you guys like, you know this Blogger as well and you make a thoughtful comments. So I'm gonna go check.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Dave Williams

Your blog too, you know. It's a wonderful. Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 2

Well, delightful. So delightful.

Speaker

Yes.

Wynne Leon

Maybe that's what this this episode should be called. Is creating a sense of community 'cause.

Speaker 2

Whoa. Yeah. There you go.

Wynne Leon

I think I think writing it right.

Speaker

Girl.

Wynne Leon

Is, I think one of our answers for what helps us extend that note. You know you you meet somebody like your. Aunt Diane and you have the infectious. And then you know you as you went down your list of inspirations, talking about Ross Gaye delight muscle. Think you know all these things? Help us.

Speaker 2

Mm.

Wynne Leon

Helps us to exercise that muscle and. Spread that infectious spirit.

Dave Williams

Yeah, I think about. Way with you guys in this. I mean, that's this blog, this podcast, so that it's just you guys have build this sense of community by having folks on and you talk about what have you, you know, dreams teased and, you know, it's just that that's infectious too of when I just had I'm drink.

Wynne Leon

Yeah.

Dave Williams

Tea now, and I had soup yesterday.

Vicki Atkinson

Yeah.

Dave Williams

Community of like minded folks of this like you know, we appreciate you know 'cause that's joyful too of somebody coming on your podcast and listing the.

Wynne Leon

Yes.

Dave Williams

I love this and that and getting that out. You're like you. Meet and know that a person a little bit. You know they.

Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah.

Dave Williams

30 minute conversation.

Wynne Leon

Yeah, and yeah, just hearing somebody's voice.

Vicki Atkinson

That's so lovely.

Wynne Leon

I heard somebody once talk about I think there were some. There were some personality that was pretty well known and they'd written books. They'd done podcasts, and they'd been on TV. And. They described that they could tell when they met a new person who said, oh, I've, you know, seen you based on how they approached them. They could tell where which medium they met.

Speaker 2

Oh, interesting.

Wynne Leon

They knew them through because. It was sort of more standoffish, like a little glitzier. Books, you know, they dig right into the idea. But the podcast people that knew this person through the podcast, they felt like friends. And I thought it was really interesting because I think when you do come back day after day and you hear somebody's voice and and the people that they talk to.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Wow, that's cool.

Dave Williams

I don't think I've. I've thought about it that way 'cause you think about as far as you know here it's it's a conversation. You're looking at something conversation and it's you. A topic. You you go down the road and in different angles, you swerve in and out. Know it's just, it's. It's it's. Over a dinner comedy like it. Reminded me of. Your recent episode with Mark, I mean Patrick, you know, just like you guys, you guys were winging it and it was just like a a dinner conversation. And I there's that. There's that intimacy there.

Speaker 2

Right down, yeah.

Wynne Leon

Sometimes we swerve more than others.

Vicki Atkinson

We were. Those kind of eye rolling or smirking when you said swerve.

Dave Williams

I didn't.

Speaker 2

We just a lot.

Dave Williams

I didn't need it in a negative way.

Vicki Atkinson

Oh no, we didn't take it that way. But I think it's it's true to form. But I was going to say, you know, I I think the open endedness of what you did, you know, and putting the. Call out was really powerful because I think you know you were nice, you know, to pay us a. Thank you very much. But I think you know what we're all trying to do is bring, you know, person first stories, you know and and. You're not being too. You know about what lane or what channel you know or do it this way. Know you were being very generous about what people could. It's kind of how, when and I like to be you know. Like in life and podcasting and other things. You know the joy really is allowing people to be who they are, right? Yeah.

Dave Williams

You know that's a fantastic thought. Yeah.

Vicki Atkinson

But I think you do that so well, and we especially love all the little things that you bring us that are not just your beautiful written work, but all of the visual inspiration. You know, I think of you as just such a talented visual artist. Oh my good.

Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah.

Dave Williams

Well, thank you.

Vicki Atkinson

You're welcome.

Wynne Leon

Well, thank you for this project and for podcasting about it. And extending that note.

Speaker 2

Yes.

Wynne Leon

It's been just delightful.

Speaker 2

Well.

Dave Williams

Sure, delightful and joyful one. Chuck. I'm not.

Speaker

Talking to you guys.

Wynne Leon

Yay. Likewise. Thank you.

Vicki Atkinson

Yes. Thank you, Dave.

Speaker

Bye.

Speaker 2

I.

Wynne Leon

Thank you for listening. Our music is composed for sharing the heart of the matter by the exclusively talented duo of Jack Canfora and Rob Koenig for show notes and more great inspiration. Please visit [oursite@sharingtheheartofthemater.com](mailto:oursite@sharingtheheartofthemater.com).