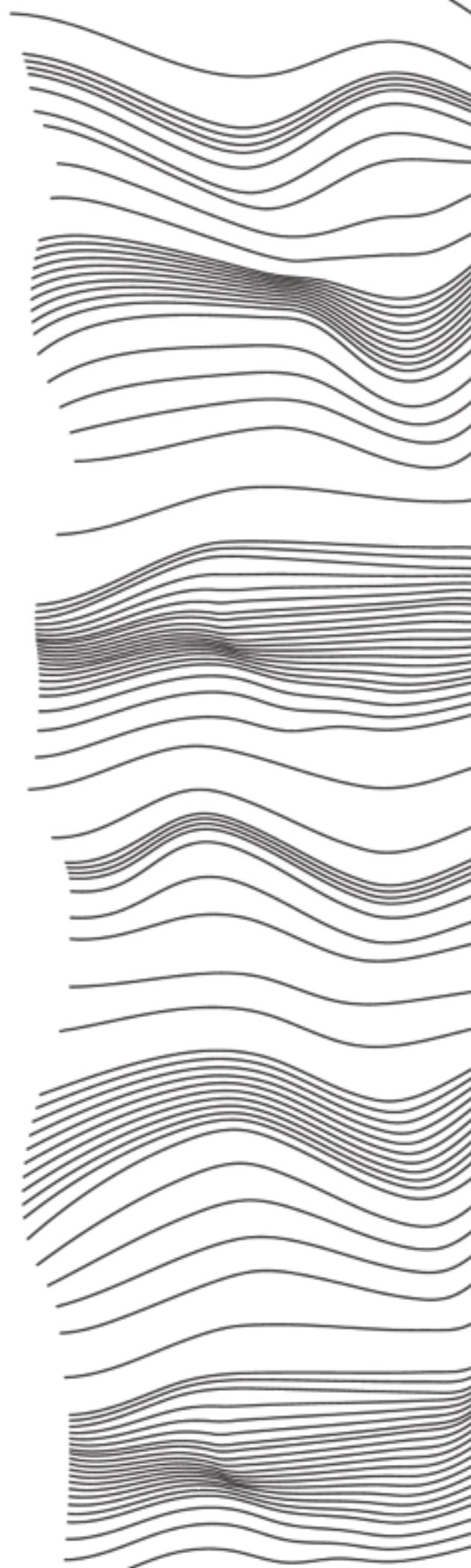


Lime Red

Defy Convention Podcast

Bonus Episode: Balance & Boundaries in a
Post-Pandemic Work Place with
Demetrio Cardona-Maguigad



EPISODE TRANSCRIPT

Demetrio

So yeah, I've been thinking about this idea about balance, right? Because I felt like the whole pandemic, not only did it really kind of uncover things, but it kind of unveiled the unbalance in the world, right? Whether it's as an individual in social settings or even like the business setting, we were just witness to so much imbalance, right? And so, my family and I have been binge watching *Cobra Kai*—those of you who do not know what *Cobra Kai* is, it's like this new series on Netflix that continues the narrative of Daniel Russo and Johnny from *Cobra Kai*.

And I just thought it was really kind of fascinating that it's not about this conflict of overcoming something. It's more now about the balancing of things, you know, Johnny is kind of in this gutter, Danny LaRusso is this very successful businessman, and then they have kids, right? And Danny's kids are now the popular rich kids and you know, Johnny's kid is in trouble. And then there's like a whole set of characters of the freaks geeks and nerds. Right?

Emily

My people? Yeah!

Demetrio

Yeah, our people.

Emily

It's our people, yeah.

Demetrio

Who eventually go, who seek Johnny as their sensei, right? to defend themselves--

Emily

Are you spoiling the plot for everyone who listens [to this podcast]? I haven't seen it at all.

Demetrio

I am, so splot poiler

Emily

Plot spoiler, that's what it's called.

Demetrio

Plot poilers.

Emily

Plot spoilers? *laughing*

Demetrio

PLOT spoilers.

Emily

Yeah. We all need a break. Demetrio is on vacation. He's in Miami right now, recording this.

Demetrio

That's correct.

Emily

That's funny. Yeah. That balance theme that's coming up a lot, especially as we—I've been coming back to the office since June most of this month. And it's a different kind of intentional coming to the office. I don't know. It feels different. Everything feels kind of weird. My balance is totally shifted. I don't even have my kids all summer. So for the last year, all I've been doing is taking care of my kids and doing work. That's pretty much it. And so now I don't have the kids, and now I have only work and other things to focus on. I don't even know what to do with myself. My grandma called me and was like, "You could work on your gnocchi." I was like, yeah, you're right. I can work on my gnocchi.

Demetrio

But what does that say about balance and your own life? So, with that being said, if it was like work and kids, that's kind of a convention, right? Then when you remove an element, like if you were on a teeter-totter you removed like a weight on one side of a teeter-totter, how does that change your life? And are you thinking about, okay, now it's balanced, or it is out of balance? And I need to be thinking of why it can work in a different way?

Emily

It's a new balance. It's not anything like, there's no balance. Balance is not a thing, I don't think. We just make choices and make boundaries, and we respect our own and each other's

boundaries or we don't. So it's funny because you're binge-watching "Cobra Kai". My favorite show to binge watch is *Alone*.

Demetrio

And I have not seen that.

Emily

That's a lot about us, I think. My fantasy is to be dropped off in the middle of nowhere with 10 primitive tools and have to survive. I would love that. That feels like—if I could handle killing an animal—which I don't think I could, but I would, I would if I had to survive—I mean, that is my dream. I would love to have the skills and ability to exist in the wilderness by myself. I love the idea of the show so much because—it's on the History Channel for anybody really wants to watch it.

There are eight seasons, season eight on right now—and I just liked this idea of just completely being alone. And the only person you really have to worry about is yourself. Because for so long, I have two kids. Ginger is going to be nine. Rowan's going to be six pretty soon. And for this last year, it's been about our, and mostly their wellbeing. And I haven't really done a whole ton for myself because I couldn't, and I've been trying to keep this business together. And obviously we've been trying to keep this business together. And the people I love around me, okay.

And right now I have no kids and it's really just me to deal with, which is great. But the show is, is like, oh, if I could, if I didn't have a phone or meetings or Instagram or TikTok, like, could I exist [outdoors] and find myself for X number of days? I don't know. Sounds like a dream though, but that's wildly imbalanced, but then you would find balance in your day, keeping yourself busy, finding things that you need looking for food, building a shelter; you would inevitably fill up your time with things because that's what we do. I don't know.

Demetrio

Interesting.

Emily

I think about that. We're thinking a lot about power, a lot about balance. If that's a real thing, if we can achieve it. I think it's more about boundaries than about balance.

Demetrio

Hm. I think there are two different things.

Emily

Mhm.

Demetrio

Boundaries to me is really kind of recognizing this idea that, you know, we as individuals or even cultures, that there's definite lines. And because we co-exist, I think that's where balance happens. It's like, how do you balance boundaries and identities and priorities and all of the things knowing that we we co-exist with other things, you know? I can't help but to think, you know, I've been here in spending time in Miami, with family. And so like, I deal with a lot of family, and I realized that, wow, there's like no boundaries between families. Or when, you know, I think about when we're raising our kids and you know, the first times I kept hearing the kids say, "I need my space. I need my boundaries," you know? And then as parents, we're like, there is no boundary between us, you know? but we know that you have to respect that, I guess, you know?

Emily

Yeah.

Demetrio

Because I think a part of boundaries maybe is a part of trying to cultivate identity and culture. And self-empowerment, you know? I recently, during the pandemic, shared with you and I think others, and I think it's okay for me to share this with others on this podcast that I realized that I was imbalanced because I let go of my boundaries a lot of time, meaning I didn't spend enough time building and nurturing my whole self and establishing those boundaries. I just let people freely walk in and out of my boundaries. And that kept me out of balance. And that's something that I was learning from.

So I'm at this point where I'm thinking I need to do more of these creative things. I need to paint more. I need to write, you know, poetry. I need to make music because those are the things that I have lost, that was a part of myself, and that was a part of my boundaries that I wanted to include in my boundaries and not having that kept me, kept this conflict in me, I think that involved like imbalance. I don't know. I guess that's kind of how I see it.

Emily

Well, your work schedule was so bonkers. Demetrio was working overnights most of the time because you had childcare responsibilities. I was trying to do everything at the same time, like kids and work and house and everything all at the same time. And then I would just completely shut down at night. You were trying to compartmentalize and do kids, and then have a meeting and then a more kids and then work from like 10:00 PM to 3:00 AM, which was totally unsustainable because we had so much work to do.

And that was the thing that I liked about BC times, before coronavirus, was: I drop off the kids, I come to work. There's a clear division of time. It takes me 25 minutes to walk here. I could reset my brain from mom brain to business brain, listen to a podcast or music to get my head right, walk in the door, put on my work suit, you know, metaphorical [suit], come up here, shut my door, put on my headphones, turn up the music and get work done. And then at a certain time, I could transform back into my other responsibility set. But when we had them all mashed into one, you know, that's probably when my diabolical headache started and high anxiety, and [I was] very much looking forward to therapy every week.

And just sort of like when I would have that downtime at night, *if I had that downtime at night*, I could not figure out for the life of me, what I wanted to do. I remember at one point, I had dropped off my kids, and I had three hours of nothing. And I was so excited initially like, oh! I'm going to do this, I'm going to do this, I'm going to do this. But I'm telling you, I sat in my car for an hour trying to decide, cause I could not decide what [to do]—and I am a decider. We know this, I could not figure out what I wanted. Because I had not thought about that for so long.

I like our working relationship where we really work at work and then we go home. We don't talk to each other at night unless there's like a funny or informative article to share, but we don't talk outside of work too much because we have such a division. We have such an identity of: this is our relationship. This is what we do at work. This is what we talk about and do. And I really missed that because I liked that compartmentalization. And for me, that balance was working.

Demetrio

Yeah.

Emily

But it's scrapped. And then I kind of lost my sense of self for the last year, which was kind of bad. And also okay. The pandemic made you really think about what was important. So I think I found it later, but it's definitely a different sense of self than I had before.

Demetrio

Yeah. And I think that's kind of what I mean is that with the pandemic, we become more aware and self aware about who we are, what we need, what our boundaries are, and what we want inside and outside of these top threes. Right? And then when we are able to be very conscious of that or aware of that, then it's a lot easier to realize, oh yeah, shit's out of balance now. I need to kind of find balance in this way. And so, you know, one thing I learned is that, I think business-wise, we talked about a few things and we've done a few things, I think, to kind of address that.

And although I was, you know, I was just busy, like 20 hours a day during the core of the pandemic. It wasn't sustainable. One thing I learned was helpful was that I had a lot more control of time, you know? I got to choose. I had a lot, a little bit more flexibility about when and what type of time I wanted to keep and have. So it, for me, it was okay to work from like 10:00 PM to 3:00 AM because it was quiet. I could focus, and I could think through things without feeling so foggy. Right?

So maybe that practice of constantly working on a million things, wasn't good. But what it helped me understand was that, you know, like it's important in our work that we not get stuck to this old way of like always compartmentalizing things like in the old capitalistic way, like, you know, nine to five and we're likely to say this, cause we can do this and that all businesses can do this, but sticking to like, you know, an eight-thirty to five, five days a week, 40 hours a week, you know, kind of regiment, you know, but it's more about, how do you empower people with their time and encourage them to kind of find their own balance in, in either in the day or in the week?

Emily

Yes.

Demetrio

So it's not like we're taking 40 hours out of someone's weekly schedule and binding them to that. And then they're free after that, you know. It's more like, okay, now I get to choose, like, this is what I want to do this week. It's going to take me this amount of time, and I'm going to

choose when I need to do it and connect with the people I need to connect with in order to get things done efficiently. Right?

Emily

Yeah.

Demetrio

So some things that we've been talking about and sort of doing, I think that's been helping, and we had that sort of conversation about which I think relates back to power. Like, who owns our time. Right? Cause time is the one thing, the most valuable thing that anyone, any one of us has. It's something we can never get back. We all struggle for that. Right? It's just more time, you know, so...

Emily

Yeah.

Demetrio

I think that's something we've addressed, and I think we're beginning to kind of rethink the convention and that sort of way, you know, what does that look like? Like moving towards merit based work rather than, you know, time-based clocking in and out.

Emily

Yeah. I've been working that way for a long time. Sometimes I work a ton. Sometimes I don't work a ton, and I get to invent really what I do all day, which is a privilege. I understand that. But I, you know, a few years ago we decided to have an experiment of unlimited vacation and that worked. Everyone felt more free to do [and] to be themselves and to do the things that give them life outside of working, which I love asking people in interviews: what do you do outside of work? What are you passionate about? Because to be an interesting person, you need to have other interests other than your job, because your job is never going to really totally fulfill you.

So, I'm always wondering, you know, how do you find inspiration and, and keep, keep your brain alive? But then I was thinking recently about some other things like, I typically don't work on Fridays. I'll pay attention to my email and slack, but I don't usually take meetings or do anything significant that day. It's more like a catch-up day. Because I have other responsibilities that I need to handle. And honestly, if you think about it, working five days

and then to be off two days is an imbalance. That's not fair. I don't know why we do that. I've been thinking about that a lot more.

I've been thinking about some ideas I've been reading about construction of the working time, which are like, do we need to have an unplugged day—a regularly occurring conscious disconnection day where, you know, you do more than just not to pay attention to email or not actually take meetings, but you a thousand percent disconnect from your phone, from social, from everything for a day. And that's like a company sanctioned event, you could do nothing. I feel like we just need to reset our brains sometimes. Because we get kind of wrapped up in the repetitive structure of what we're used to doing, like reaching for our phone, checking our email, looking at slack, responding to texts.

Is that too much of an ask to ask everyone to just really unplug to reset their brains? Because I have some of my best thoughts when I'm not paying attention to any thing electronic or that's demanding my attention, children included. Or is it something like we moved to a four day workweek? Maybe it's possible. I don't know, but maybe we need four days or maybe we give everybody flexible time during the days.

Or can we come up with a better system that suits people as individuals, rather than the classic capitalist Howard grabbing industrialized structure that we're still operating under? because it's really not great. And we definitely with the technology that we have today, don't need to work that way anymore. I think about the same structure of education, the same structure as capitalism. Like what are we trying to do here? Are we recognizing the individual and the individual's strengths and achievements and building the workday around that and empowering that? or are we turning out products and people so that they can become fodder for somebody to make a lot of money?

I kind of lean to the, obviously to the former, but how do we make that work in a small business where we still have clients and have to exist in a system and a structure that is operating in the old way for the most part? To say, fuck it, and become—now we're going to get explicit warning—but do we just say fuck it and make a new way? Or do we try to shoe horn it kind of into the existing way? Kind of like what B Corps is trying to make a little thing, or we just say: you know what, we're going to invent a whole new way of doing this and be the leader and how that happens. That's what I've been thinking about a lot the last few months.

Demetrio

Yeah. And I think that relates to the level we were just talking about earlier about boundaries, right? It's like, I feel like after hearing you, I can't help but think about, wow, like, you know,

our, the company identity and who are as LimeRed it's very distinct, but for so long has been operating under this old idea about how to actually operate business, right? Like the five day a week, you know, 40 hours a week.

Emily

We used to give a clock our time, what a trash pile that was. I remember that, oh, never go back. Never. That's like literal commoditization of our knowledge. No, thank you.

Demetrio

Right. And so thinking about these boundaries now, going back to what I was saying, by doing that, we've kind of allowed these things, these systems and tools to kind of control almost our own identity, and we're getting who we are and how we would want to operate. But now we're thinking, okay, there's an imbalance here. These are the things that we need to kind of start thinking about and starting to be a little bit more unconventional about in order to find balance in order to define our own boundaries and make it work, you know? At least that's how I'm kind of thinking about this at this point, I think that's important, you know?

Emily

I think so too. Should we just start a commune? Get it over with? I don't know.

Demetrio

I don't know if [the answer is] a commune.

Emily

I'll build everyone's houses.

Demetrio

I mean, I live—

Emily

You can make the music.

Demetrio

I live in a co-op, so I sort of know what that is. I sort of know what that looks and feels like, but I think there's something there, too, you know? I mean, during the pandemic, I think one thing that was just so lonely was our little family was living in this apartment in Pilsen, in a

very quiet and isolated neighborhood. There was no real sense of connection and community. We were in quarantine for several months. And then during and then during the pandemic, we moved into this space where there's common spaces, where boundaries are being blurred or boundaries overlap in a very respectful way.

You know, like when you're starting to think about place or thinking about how you make decisions with other people, how does my family identity kind of relate to your family identity and how we co-exist and how we live together? You know, like there's a lot of things we can learn from cooperative models and how we operate. But I think it goes back again to like really thinking about like, how do we want to work? You know, how do we want to operate as a business? I guess.

Emily

Yeah. And it's funny, too, because personally, I don't like rules and structure. I just don't. I like to do what I want to do when I want to do it. I mean within reason. I mean, I do time block my time and have actually an insane schedule, but other people don't want to work that way. Other people want to have consistency and rules and times of day [when] they do certain things in time and repetitive things. And that's also great. So then the question is to how do we find the right balance of people so that everyone's aware of how everyone else works?

Also even though we are coming to the office, it's not required. So, our new hire lives in the quad cities, and we've never had a fully remote person on the payroll as a full-time employee ever. So now we have a different working environment and Lina's coming in [to the office] sometimes. And you're coming in most of the time, I'm coming in most of the time. Because I guess maybe that's just our old gen X ways. We just want to be at work, please get me out of my house. Oh my God. Maybe it's not generational. Maybe it's just their personality type, but I just, I truly enjoy being here and being not in my house. It's just such a great change of pace. Yeah, everything's up for grabs. I think I've said that said that a few times.

Everything's up for grabs and everything is up for reevaluation. Like when we were talking, to bring it back to branding when we live our values and truly try to recognize the individual and their place in this little business family, how can we serve that individual? And, we know too being a small company that we're not a destination for careers; we're a stepping stone to other careers for our other people who work here, maybe not me, but everyone else. So they will be here for a time. They will learn a certain set of [skills], they'll have an experience and then they'll move on.

My goal is to make sure that story is a good story, a positive story for that person and for our company. I haven't always been successful with that, but that's kind of how I think about it. So in that context, our beliefs are up for grabs are up for reevaluation. Do we believe that working nine to five, four to five days a week is really important? Do we believe that, you know, whatever else we've always believed is important or real anymore? Because if you're truly values driven, those beliefs change over time, and they should change over time, and it should be a group decision, not just [my decision].

Like right now, we're hiring an intern. We've interviewed two [so far], and Lina's in charge of scheduling the interviews and leading the interviews. And ultimately that intern will be working with Lina. So far I've liked both of the candidates. And also, I think that is Lina's decision. Who does she want to hire? Because she's the one who's going to be working with that person for the most part. That's more her decision. So that's like thinking about how we restructure power too, a little bit in balance and accountability.

Demetrio

Yeah. When you say things are up for grabs, what are the things you think we should be grabbing onto?

Emily

Well, I know that it seems like everyone writes their values down, but I mean, we really need to take a minute and reevaluate what we all hold dear. We are a very different company than what we did five years ago. So I'm proposing this month, or whenever Michael's in town, that we do a values assessments and figure out where we really want to start and where we want to hold each other to. That is something that we need to define first, before we really think about re-evaluating any one of our systems or our ways of working or any operation.

Our B Corp sort of planning of like, this is how we evaluate suppliers. This is how we evaluate each other. This is how we evaluate our work and the people we work for, our environmental impact. We really have to get down to what we hold dear and how we actually interact, that's step one. But other than that, I feel like all of it's up for grabs. We can really evaluate any system or any interaction once we have that foundation figured out. And, you know, in terms of like, people are asking, well, how do you dismantle white supremacy or make yourself truly anti-racist organization? That's where it starts, that's it.

And so then, then through the lens of knowing, understanding, what makes something a racist system or understanding what makes something a patriarchal culture, then you start to look at your values and then you break all of that down and sort of rewrite the system,

which is what we've been doing for a long time. But I feel like we're at a point where we need to do it again, even though we have been working toward those things for many years. So I think we're always in this phase of constant reinforcement, in a constant improvement and evaluation, it was just how we work.

So that's why I think maybe I haven't been that bored at my job for 17 years. Because it feels like we're always re-evaluating, but I feel like that's something that's core to our company and we should really do it intentionally. And now we have kind of a different staffing situation to like bring everyone else into that decision making process.

Demetrio

Yeah. I mean, we do this for a lot of our clients, you know, and we get to see the impact of that, you know, and how we measure it and how to actually go about doing it, which is pretty important.

Emily

Yeah. It's funny though. I think a lot of people think that that sounds like a fun thing to do, but it's not always, like you have to actually want to do it because it's hard. And then you're going to have to make some major decisions on who you are and what you stand for. And then that means some sacrifice, something or exchange anyway, maybe not sacrifice, but definitely change.

Demetrio

Yeah. And committing to it. Right?

Emily

Definitely.

Demetrio

I think that's probably one of the hardest things you know, is that sort of commitment. With any sort of change, when you go that deep into values and beliefs, we've seen, you know, for a lot of organizations, it's not that easy, and no one's ever really taught any sort of company or organization how do we nurture this garden of beliefs and values and how [to] help it grow within our organization when things have kind of been left the way they were for so long, you know?

Emily

Yeah, you don't just write them down and put them on the wall and then that's it, you know. You actually have to do it. This is why we're talking about operationalizing your branding, which means actually walking the talk that you say you do, which means you have to look at your operations, your protocols, your policies, your contracts, documents, your founding documents, your employee review practices, your hiring practices, your cost structure. It's all the same part of the same system. It's why when you start doing this, it really just opens up a giant, giant can of worms, but they're good worms.

So I think it's a really the only way. Yeah. And you have to be open to feedback and sometime that's critical. And I know when I first started this company, I could not handle it. I could not handle critical feedback at all. And then you just sort of, you just learn how to do that. Because it's not about you as a person, it's about improving the working conditions for everyone else or improving your impact on the world, which a lot of people have really great ideas on how to do that. It's not just about what you think. As an Enneagram eight, that's a hard pill to swallow, but we all get there. Some of us.

Demetrio

Right. Well, you know, and then I think it goes back [to] we talked about. You talked a little bit about awareness. I mentioned a little bit about commitment to change and those beliefs and values. One thing we also talked about was just this sort of, kind of this business partnership, right? To me, that's balance. There's one identity on one side, and there's another identity on the other and it's bound together in some way that kind of keeps everything from spiraling out of control, I guess

Emily

It's still [spirals out of control] sometimes. Well, now we have Michael to keep us in check. Thank God. Oh my God. I mean, we had Stacy too. Holy shit. I mean, we really needed them, but yeah. I mean, before we started recording, we were talking a little bit about that. And like, I mean, if we're looking at who we are, as people, we're in the reverse of classic business partnerships. This is the thing I struggle with the most because no one expects a womxn to walk in the room and be the decider, right? Even other womxn. And it's so difficult to have the kind of drive and ambition and vision that I have. But also knowing that I have to temper that because I'm a womxn, it sucks. I'm telling you it sucks.

And I feel like it's, it's just a hard thing to get your head around. I have had a hard time with that, and I feel like no one—people expect me to be, because I'm a lady, if they don't know me, [expect me to be] a nurturer, a helper make sure everyone around is really comfortable and

understands what's going on. And, I should be good at managing people and good at HR, but I am not good at any of that stuff at all. You, [Demetrio], are great at that stuff. You're like, let's make sure everyone really understands what's going on. Everyone's being heard. Everyone has a chance to voice their opinions and thoughts and do it in a really inclusive, fun way to do that.

You have been the designer of all of those processes to do that stuff. And then I'm good at looking at everything and saying this, or this is the direction we should probably go in and then let's go test that, you know? I think when people see us, they kind of assume that because you're male presenting and I'm female presenting that that would be the opposite of what we are, which is interesting.

Demetrio

Yeah. And that needs to be changed.

Emily

Yeah. Yeah.

Demetrio

Yeah, yeah. The other day, and I hope I'm not getting too personal here, Adrianna was saying, I think I'm more macho feminist. And I'm like, what's that mean? What does macho feminism mean? And she's like, it's like I believe I'm a feminist, but you know, I also grew up with my dad being a certain way. And and I got it. I understood what she was trying to say is that, it's okay if you are a womxn, you should be able to kind of speak your mind as equally as a man would, even if you were like a macho man, maybe you could be like a macho womxn, that's a sort of way. Right?

Emily

You can try.

Demetrio

We were joking about that. I guess for me, it's like I don't know. I guess like for me, this was something that was really interesting that we talked about in our work with the Center for Humans and Nature. And I think—which was one of the biggest challenges of working with them, because ultimately, they were an organization that fundamentally did not believe in dualism. Right?

Emily

Right.

Demetrio

And it was all about more of a gestalt, holistic approach to being, and relationships to all things. But the name in itself is—

Emily

Dualistic.

Demetrio

Dualistic, you know? And then it's like, where do you find that balance when we talk about humans and nature? And I think a lot of our work was trying to find to talk more about the relationship right between the two.

Emily

Or your place in it, your place among it as part of it.

Demetrio

Yeah, right. You know, and so I guess, for me, I fundamentally believe everyone as human beings, you're capable of being, you both carry a feminine and masculine. You are capable of doing good and bad. You are capable of great success and complete failures. You know, I guess a balance to me is finding the right stones to step on to keep those dualities in balance. I guess. I don't know if I'm getting too far out, but...

Emily

You're always far out. And it works.

Demetrio

Yeah, when it comes to like our working relationship, I'm very aware of what you're really good at.

Emily

Yeah, same.

Demetrio

And I trust you, like 2000%, because being aware of that and knowing that sort of boundaries, I think that helps keep us in balance. Yeah. And I think that's what it goes back to what I was talking about earlier is that I don't think that this partnership would, and the way we operate things would be balanced if either one of us weren't aware of each other's boundaries, each other's capabilities you know, strengths and power that we really have and what we contribute together to keep things balanced. And that to me is what I was kind of referring to early on in this conversation is how does a business and business partnerships think about balance to meet and to achieve success, I guess.

Emily

I think it's a story that we're writing all the time, too.

Demetrio

Yeah, I think so.

Emily

Yeah. Hmm. That's a lot to think about. Now My brain is going, dammit, I was trying to just do meetings today. Now I'm thinking about all this stuff. I mean, this is important stuff to think about.

Demetrio

Yeah. I mean, I think that's why also when we started talking about job titles and roles, and when we started introducing this idea about advocacy, that was also all about like boundaries and balance too, because that was a tool to really prevent designers wanting to be developers or telling developers what to develop and developers telling designers what to design. Right?

Emily

Right, that's the age-old conflict, sure.

Demetrio

Because everyone's capable, everyone at least in our teams, has been very capable of doing that. But what is essential to your role in this group to keep balance, right? If you've moved, if you're a developer moving too far into design, things are beginning to move out of balance, right?

Emily

Well yeah. So just for context, a few years ago we started to shift how we thought about individual roles within the company. And instead of people having lead web developer or, you know, or account manager, we would say: You are the advocate for accuracy. You are the advocate for relationships. And that takes your role out of your day-to-day tasks and more into a more holistic view of the business and your role within it. So there's accountability for the work in terms of relationships, but then there's accountability in terms of the vision of the company for relationships or accuracy.

When I would propose some kind of nonsense, crazy idea, I would depend on the developers to shoot it down and [to] look for inaccuracies in that [idea], or say like, well, that's not going to work because this, this, and this helps me get ahead of potential problems and to think things through more thoroughly, which I'm not always great at. That's kind of how we were showing this is your strength and this is why it's valuable. And for others to see someone who was going to shoot an idea down all the time to see the value in that and why that's actually important for everyone else to understand, or for everyone else to contribute their advocacy role to the health of projects and the health of the company. That worked so well when we did that.

Demetrio

Yeah.

Emily

That's another thing we need to think about too, with our new hires. And now that we have more of a co-op kind of model, or we have more partners than we do employees. I think that's something that we would bring to the larger group too, and say, how do we all fit all of this together? And what is the vision? What are we trying to accomplish? And that's a good question. See, I told you it was all for grabs. When will it ever end? Never. Oh.

Demetrio

Yeah. It doesn't.

Emily

Oh it never does, it hasn't ended. So it's just, here we are.

Demetrio

Absolutely. Yeah. I thought that's really interesting. I'd never really kind of thought about all this and that's where context boundaries and balance. I think I'm realizing now how important that is actually

Emily

It's so important. Yeah. I mean, I've set some pretty hard boundaries with some people in my life lately, and I regret nothing. Like I just know that in order for me to function in this little world that we have, I have to be a healthy person. And so that means sometimes saying no to people or losing things or losing people. And if you thought it through, I think it's okay. Yeah. It's just things change and that's inevitable. Lina, what do you think?

Lina

To me, the balance, what Demetrio was saying of balance is almost found within the boundaries, that's the biggest takeaway from this whole conversation. And maybe [the balance] is never there, but I think it starts with setting boundaries and honoring the boundaries.

Demetrio

Yeah. Visually looking at it, it's like when you picture like a teeter-totter or a seesaw, right? It's like when you have two people on a seesaw, you're both working with your own identities, kind of keeping things balanced back and forth. But if you remove one person, it gets out of balance, but not only that, it's also where you place the pendulum. Right? Or the piece that literally keeps the balance of the board. If you've moved that closer or farther out into those, which is the boundary, right? That really kind of changes like the experience and, and the business.

Emily

It also changes how much work everybody has to do. Literally. Interesting. I love that analogy.