

*Transkrypt podcastu PO NITCE ARIADNY, odcinek 29: Jak żyć po swojemu opowiada
Ryan Holiday*

Cześć, tu Ariadna Wiczling. Dzisiaj w moim podcaście, który nagrywam dla przedsiębiorców chcących łatwiej stworzyć swój biznes online odnoszący sukcesy, mam specjalnego gościa.

Jest nim Ryan Holiday, który jest uważany za geniusza marketingowego. Nie bez przyczyny. Zajmuje się marketingiem od kiedy skończył 19 lat. Był szefem marketingu dla wielkiej amerykańskiej marki odzieżowej. Jest zatrudniany do nietypowej promocji wielu książek między innymi Tima Ferrisa, pracuje też dla Google.

Ryan jest autorem pięciu świetnie sprzedających się książek, w tym dwóch z dziedziny marketingu. Jego 3 ostatnie książki wywodzą się z nurtu filozofii stoickiej. A ostatnia „The Daily Stoic” zawiera cytaty wielkich filozofów do których dodane są tłumaczenia i refleksje, dzięki temu książka jest dużo łatwiej strawna od oryginalnych dzieł.

To niesamowite, jak filozofia która była popularna ponad 2000 lat temu jest aktualna przez cały czas, nawet dla przedsiębiorców w dzisiejszych czasach. Pierwszy stoik był zresztą przedsiębiorcą. Ludzie kiedyś mieli tak naprawdę bardzo podobne problemy jak teraz.

I choć trudno w to uwierzyć to natura ludzka nie zmieniła się przez te 2000 lat.

Ryan zobaczył to, co było ponadczasowe i odświeżył to w swoich książkach. Zapraszam Cię do wysłuchania tego inspirującego wywiadu o życiu i naszych życiowych wyborach.

Hello, Ryan!

Hi!

First I wanted to thank you for coming to the show and also for using your marketing talents to promote the wisdom that comes from thousand years before us and actually having the courage to do so. Because I can imagine that's not something popular and I know that people roll their eyes when they hear about philosophy and stoicism – it seems to be not-our-days thing. So I really want to thank you for that. I really love that you're doing this.

Well, I appreciate it. It's interesting, I think, that a lot of people think that doing something different or unusual it's courageous. I actually think it the opposite, right? To do the same thing as everyone else is on the one hand safer, but on the other hand much, much harder. I'm always trying to think about doing something unique, different or unexpected because that's not only where I have the most fun, but I actually think there's the most potential. So when I try to do things that are different, like I try to revive old schools of thought, I'm not necessarily doing that as some intellectual bravery, I just think that I don't want to do what everyone else is doing, 'cause that would be really boring.

Yes, that's true. But I think that you really need to use your promotion skills, for example to make people interested in this topic. I think that if someone would post: "Oh, check out this stoic's wisdom" I think it would be crickets.

Sure. When I sat down to write about stoicism I read pretty much everything that had ever been written about the topic. And what I found is that most of the books were on the same thing, like the classics – the originals – were very good, and most of the books published since then were just sort of analysis. And what I realized is that unless you are already a huge fan of the stoics, those books were really boring, because they weren't adding anything new except for disassembling and dissecting stuff that you are already familiar with. So when I sat down to write the book, what I was really thinking then was: "How can I do something totally different and unique? How can I add something rather than follow other people's footsteps?" And that's how I tried to approach all the books or projects that I do. I tried to find a unique angle that other people haven't taken.

Tell me what drives you to write about this. Some people are stoics also in our times as well but they don't write books about it. Why do you want to promote it? Why do you want people to read about it?

I guess I'm always trying to write things I'm personally interested in. You know, they say that "entrepreneurs try to scratch their own itch." I think that's true with writers as well – ideally you should be trying to write about some problems or issues or things, you're trying to get better at in your own life. I think that if you're just talking about things that you've mastered, it's really boring and it could descend into lecturing. So I don't pretend to be like some stoic sage who mastered all these things. I'm writing about the things I'm

dealing with on the day to day basis. I'm just trying to make them a bit more universal, so there's an audience larger than one.

But I think that when you have something that was once really, really popular and resonated with millions and millions of people, and then something has changed in culture and history that makes that thing suddenly fall by the waste, I'm interested in figuring out, what that is.

It's really hard to invent something new. I want to find things that were old, that have been lost in the translation and I want to update that and bring that into the larger audience. So I'm excited about the challenge and puzzle of that, certainly.

And why you stop writing about marketing – I don't know if you're planning to write any marketing book anytime – but how did that come?

I definitely didn't stop at all. I've just spent the last year working on a marketing book that will come out in 2017. But I think, and that's what we've been talking about earlier, the last thing you should ever do is repeat yourself or tread on older grounds. I wrote a marketing books and my plan was to immediately transition into another topic, and I ended up doing another marketing book in between – so I did two in a row. If I'd written another one then, however interested I was in the topic, I think it would've pigeonhole me as a marketing guru and I wasn't interested in that. I'm much more interested in exploring lots of topics and being able to connect with people over complex, disparate ideas. And one of the philosophy power is, Robert GREENE talks about it, *this it's always to it's unexpected*.

So that transition was really important, I will probably do several of those throughout the course of my carrier. The last thing you wanna do is to write one book and then update it every year, or write one book and then write a similar book, and really similar another book and then another book, 'cause people get really bored. When you tackle new topic, you're not only keeping your existing fan base on their toes but you create opportunities to reach new people. My philosophy books have been sold in more copies than my marketing books but I would argue that they ultimately driven a fair amount of people to the marketing books and vice versa. I think it's always important that you're exploring new topics, so you're growing rather than stagnating.

And I actually think that the philosophy books that you wrote are kind of like self-development books, perfect for entrepreneurs who are interested in marketing. So it all ties up.

There's always so many people who are interested in marketing things. There's a lot more people who are interested in improving themselves, overcoming obstacles and mastering their own egos. So I'm also trying to go broader and reach more people in the process.

Can you tell me – 'cause I know you run a lot and you say it's a great exercise for your brain – is exercising and running an example of having big self-discipline. How do you develop a self-discipline? How do you think people can practice that?

I don't know if it's something that you develop as much as it's something you do. It's not self-discipline that makes me go for a run this morning, it was going for a run this morning that increased my self-discipline. So it's something that you do, right? It's like a habit. You don't just study habits in the abstract and then you have better habits. You create good habits and you start them, one day at a time.

So I think that routine is important, obviously. I think having something that you want to do is also something important. If I hated running, it would be a lot harder to do it every day – I still think it would be possible – but it's also the fact that I actually enjoy it. But it's about the doing. The process of getting into action creates more action. A lot of people study routines and they look for these hacks and read psychological studies but I think it's just the matter of doing more than anything else.

Yeah, but how do you start with the first step?

I reject that it's anything more complicated than doing it, right? Let's say you decide you want to go running, so you go running. I don't think that there's any advice that I can give someone rather than: "You have to get your ass off the couch and do it!" Running is hard, swimming is hard, going to crossfit, eating healthy is hard – there's no question – but the reason that people do them is that there are both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards for them. It creates better body, healthier life, clearer thinking, etc. But also while you're doing them they are inherently pleasurable. I think people's lack of awareness about that, the unfamiliarity with it, and maybe the fact that you don't immediately get it on the first couple

of times, is what deters people. But that what I mean, it's sort of committing to do it. It's like a podcast – the first episode is not that great, but tenth or fifteenth episodes in and it becomes a process that is inherently rewarding. So if you commit to do a run of ten episodes or to run three times a week for one month, you find that it's not the self-discipline that keeps you going, it's the actual intrinsic reward of the doing that you are craving essential and that's why you keep doing it. To me not running, like the decision to say: "Hey, I don't feel good today. My leg hurts or I don't have time" is actually a harder decision for me to make than the decision to put on my shoes and go running 'cause I love doing it.

I can imagine that you do some things that you don't like to do but you have to do them. Do you think that philosophy, especially stoicism, helps you somehow?

Yeah, of course. Life is filled with things that you don't want to do but you have to do and philosophy, especially stoicism, is a set of reminders that helps you in the sense that: "Hey, it could be a lot worse than this!" or "Hey, there is a larger obligation that you have as a human being", or you gave someone your word about this things and your word is important so that's why you're gonna follow through it whether you want to do it or not. And it's also accepting that there are situations that you didn't cause, that have limited your options and therefore you're having to choose between this or that. And although you might not like to do either, you have to do one. That sort of blunt acceptance of reality and reality terms is something that philosophy helps you with. It's also a reminder that complaining does almost nothing about the situation so why bother?

I would like to ask you also about your choice that may seem not popular, which is moving to the country. You, as well known expert, living in the New York, moved to the country. What drove that decision?

I tried to do that. I've lived in Los Angeles, New York City, I've spent time in San Francisco and other big cities – like the places you're supposed to live if you have a certain job or you work in a certain industry. And I just found them to be very unpleasant. And I didn't like them, so I stopped to live in them. I just said: "What is life supposed to be?" It's supposed to be what you want it to be. You have to have control over it. There's no reason that the way other people live their lives should really have any bearing on how

you decide to live yours and more specifically, where you decide to live yours.

So first I moved to Austin, Texas and I loved it and then I decided to move to the country, thirty minutes east of Austin. It's been an amazing experience. I wanna die there. It's where I am most happy. So that's why I live there. I don't really overthink it that much either. A lot of people are over concerned about what they're supposed to do but I think that's typically a mistake.

Can you tell us what you do there?

I live in about forty acres. We have a bunch of different animals: cattle, some goats, chickens, ducks. It's not like some large scale rancho operation – it's much more for fun. It's about sort of being connected to the nature and something larger than yourself. It's about sort of disconnecting and having something very real and tangible to be involved with. You know, I spent all Saturday chopping down trees and repairing fences. And I didn't look at my phone the entire time and that experience is something that is lacking in modern life. Look, if I wasn't doing that and I lived in the city, I would've been watching TV or sitting at my computer or going to meetings. It sort of forces you to disconnect a little bit.

That's really great. I also enjoy disconnecting like that. I know you and your wife are expecting baby, so how do you think stoicism will influence your parenting style?

I don't want to speculate on something that I don't know anything about. I think that's one of the problems of the Internet, when you're paid to talk about things for a living, is that you can start to think that you're an expert about things that you actually have no idea about. So whatever plans and thoughts I have about this thing, I'm more than open to the fact that they would be far more complicated and harder than I imagine. So I try to approach these things with open mind and trying to focus on being in the moment, sort of experiencing as it happens rather than projecting a very strong set of preconceived beliefs on something that I just don't know about.

That's a very wise answer, I guess. Can you tell me a little bit about your writing process? I saw your video how you wrote your recent book and it was very impressive, especially the research that you do. Do you think that many others do so

much research?

I think every author is different and there is not necessarily right or wrong way to do a book. Actually, there's probably a wrong way to do it. If you don't put in the time, if you don't do a research period. If you just think that this is something that you can just make up in a drug filled blitz of inspiration, you're gonna be surely awakened to what the process is actually like. But I would say that in my process I tend to think that doing the framework and the research and the thinking the project through all the way to the end is the most essential part of process. I think a lot of people want to just dive in to doing 'cause they're so passionate or excited about the project, but they don't necessarily want to bugged down into details and planning. That's not to say that you have to stick with the plan all the way round. I think Eisenhower was saying: "Plans are worthless but the planning is everything". It's the thinking and the process and the sort of ritual around that's important. So with my research that's what I'm doing. I'm just trying to get as far ahead of this things as possible so I'm not just a car driving in the night only able to see the headlight distance in front of you. I wanna have more visibility than that. Some books requires tons and tons of research, some don't. Some you can conceivably manage in your head. If I was writing a memoir about myself, I probably wouldn't need to do so much research because it would be about my own life. But when I'm writing about a vast historical topic, I wanna do tons of research. If I'm gonna write about some complicated series of events, I'm gonna do tons of research. I think it depends on the project and the author. But personally I love to do as much research as possible.

You mentioned that authors get into the projects with a lot of passion. And I know you have particular opinion about 'passion'.

Yeah, I just think that 'passion' is not nearly enough. Lots of people are passionate about lots of topics very few manage to write books, let alone successful books, on those topics. And I think the reason for that is that it's really, really hard. You need to be motivated more than just a have a fascination or energy about something, you have to have a clear sense of what you want to accomplish. You have to know what your resources are, you have to know what your timetable is. I just think you just have to have more than a passion. I say 'want' is not nearly enough on a book, you have to do it, right? It has to be like: "You would die, if you didn't do it". Otherwise, I think you get something pretty mediocre.

Yes, so it has to be something more than just a passion. And why do you think that topic of passion is so popular right now? Everyone talks about passion.

Well, passion is easy. It's easy to tell people to find their passions. It's easy to say: "Oh, you're passionate about that, go for it". It's harder to say: "Hey, I think you're missing some intangible element". Or it's hard to tell a passionate person that they're not gonna succeed because that's not what they wanna hear. I think passion is superficial and easy.

What then we can strike for instead of passion?

I think purpose is better. I think having clear sense of what you're trying to accomplish and why, and what it means, is a substitute for passion. I think dispassion – being clear-headed, objective, self-aware and in control of yourself – that's better than passion as well.

That's very stoic what you've just said.

Well, stoics weren't against the passions. Historically passion was always concerned as a bad thing. And it's only more recently that's it's taken on this positive context. So I tried to look backwards in terms of my definition there.

So going to *The Daily Stoic*. I've noticed that you are using some new promotion strategy for it. What I mean is that you kind of create new brand for that: there's website, newsletter, some freebees going and explaining what stoicism is. Do you try to create some sort of movement with this?

I don't think that I'm doing anything new but I am saying...

I'm just compering that to the other books.

Yeah. I'm just trying to create sort of a site around the idea that is bigger and last even longer than the book. I just want that book to be less about me and more about the topic at hand. And that's why I am doing it that way.

So you're just trying to make it last as its own being, right?

Yes. I'm trying to make a sort of a platform around the idea.

Can you say how stoicism can help entrepreneurs in particular?

Look, I think that an entrepreneur wakes up every day and responds to a set of circumstances that are outside their control, right? They're responding to the market, the weather, employees, investors. And their job is to make the most of that situation and to do the best they possibly can. And that's what stoicism is about as well.

I guess that entrepreneur is someone who has to fight their fights every day and stoicism is kind of popular and used to be popular in history in harder times when people had to learn how to deal with the stuff that was coming their way. Do you think that this has anything in common?

Yeah, I think there's a reason that stoicism has always been popular in times of upheaval, because it's a philosophy designed around adversity and responding to adversity. And that's why it's always been popular with soldiers, entrepreneurs and writers. The founder of stoicism was the guy named Zeno, who happened to discover this philosophy in general after he was a merchant and he suffered a shipwrecked. He washed up in Athens and he met a philosopher there. That let him to study philosophy in general and then he founded his own school. I think is interesting to think that this philosophy was literally founded by an ancient entrepreneur. I think that's why it continues to resonate entrepreneurs thousands of years later because it was very much designed for them.

And how do you recommend reading *The Daily Stoic*?

It's pretty shape forward. It's a page a day. You start on the day you buy the book or I guess you can start on January 1st if you feel like it. But the idea is, you read a page a day and then you try to live or embody the exercise or thought of that day within the next 24 hours. Then you start the same process the following day. So the stoics are about reviewing the day at the end of the day, and prepare to the day at the beginning of the day. And I think this books fits into both those approaches pretty seamlessly.

So having like a morning routine with *The Daily Stoic* is something you would wish people do?

Yeah, I would hope so. I have a daily routine myself. I don't obviously sit down and read my own book, that would be weird. But I do try to think about the same things every day

that I'm quoting stoics are talking about in this book.

What are your plans for next books? You said that you've already written some marketing book, right?

I try not to talk about projects before they're done or released but it will be a book about how to make a market a really great products. And hopefully – products and projects that last. That's certainly what I'm trying to acquire to my work. I'm somewhat bored with people who make things that are just flashing the pen.

Do you have any final words that you would like to leave us with?

No, not really. There's a line in one of my books from Bismarck: "Any fool can learn from experience. I prefer to learn by the experience of others." And that's what I think reading is about and that's why I think it helps. And that's how I try to live my life and I encourage people to do the same. They don't have to read my books, but there are so many great books out there, so many wise thinkers and I would urge people to take advantage of that.

Thank you very much for this interview.

Thank you for having me.

Nie wiem co wam najbardziej zaimponowało w Ryaniu, ale mnie bardzo podoba się jego asertywność i odwaga robienia rzeczy nie tak, jak wszyscy.

Ryan rzucił szkołę w wieku 19 lat, aby podjąć bardzo interesującą pracę. Po kilku latach sukcesów i zamieszkiwania w różnych wielkich miastach, gdzie mieszkają ludzie z jego branży, przeprowadził się na wieś.

Jak sam mówi to, co inni myślą i jak żyją nie powinno mieć żadnego wpływu na to, jak Ty żyjesz i gdzie żyjesz. Jeżeli będziecie śledzić Ryana w mediach społecznościowych, to zobaczycie jakie fajne ma ranczo, zwierzęta i jak sielsko sobie tam żyje.

Ryan mówi, że podjęcie tematów filozoficznych wcale nie było odważne z jego strony, ale

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Ja się trochę z nim nie zgadzam. Nawet jeżeli chciałby podjąć inny temat niż książki marketingowe, to mógł zrobić coś, co jest jednak bardziej popularne, co teoretycznie lepiej się przyjmie, a on postanowił wypromować stoicyzm i mu się to udało.

Jeżeli chcesz zobaczyć w jaki sposób Ryan pisze książkę, zbiera i porządkuje treści, to w notatkach do tego odcinka podcastu będzie link do wideo, o którym mówiłam trakcie wywiadu.

Serdecznie polecam też przeczytanie wywiadu na blogu Andrzeja Tucholskiego, który miał przyjemność rozmawiać z Ryanem w tym roku. Wywiad jest bardzo dobry i mówi między innymi o ego i pokonywaniu niedobrych cech swojego charakteru. Bardzo polecam, Andrzej zrobił świetną robotę.

W notatkach będą też linki do książek Ryana, zachęcam Cię do ich przeczytania, bo zawierają naprawdę cenną mądrość wielu pokoleń, która jest opowiedziana jasnym językiem i z ciekawymi historycznymi przykładami.

Odpowiednie podejście do Twoich codziennych zmagania pomoże Ci pokonać trudności i zająć dalej w biznesie.

Notatki do tego odcinka podcastu są na stronie ponitceariadny.pl/29.

Jeśli podobał Ci się ten odcinek, to proszę podzielić się informacją o nim z jedną osobą, której przy się odrobina inspiracji i kop do działania.

Dziękuję za wszystkie oceny w iTunes, jeśli masz chwilę to zostaw mi kolejną recenzję, dodają mi one energii do dalszej pracy. Do usłyszenia w kolejnym odcinku!