Raymond Sidney-Smith 0:03
Hello personal productivity enthusiasts and community welcome to Anything But Idle the productivity news podcast today's show is brought to you by ProductivityVoice and i'm Ray Sidney-Smith

Augusto Pinaud 0:16
and I am Augusto Pinaud.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 0:18
We're your hosts for Anything But Idle this is episode 51 it's called spring cleaning up your productivity systems and we're recording this on march 29 2021 so happy holi to those who are celebrating happy belated spring equinox and really now's a perfect time of the year generally to think about cleaning up your productivity systems really as the weather changes for those of us in the northern hemisphere we're having spring for those of you in the southern hemisphere you're having fall upon you and so in addition to the productivity and technology news of the week we're going to cover this week our featured story which is all about understanding what microsoft vivo will mean for employees and so welcome to those of you who are watching us live feel free to ask questions and chat in the chat and we'll be happy to interact with you there but each week we review and discuss the productivity and technology news headlines of the week and we usually start that off with a theme and so this week's theme is all about spring cleaning related to our productivity systems and so let's kick this off of gussto with what really is the benefit of having a spring cleaning of your productivity systems what do you think about when it when it comes to the idea of spring cleaning your productivity systems

Augusto Pinaud 1:36
no i i didn't grow up with the concept of spring cleaning i grow up in a country where you basically had to pretty close weather the whole year so there was no such thing as a spring in the fall you know it was more rain or no rain that was really what it was was raining season or no season no rain at all so i never grow up plus i grow in a country where people don't get ripped off it's tough because you don't know if you are going to be able to find the replacement when you need it so so people storage an incredible amount of junk over the years and that junk past generation generation because of that that said my first kunshan conscious experience with spring cleaning and productivity came from my friend michael fluent ski many many many years ago mycoflora winsky begin doing a clean of his and redesign of his office on the spring and if you go to his website you will find them and it's been years doing the same thing and he goes and used to be a lot more extreme than what he is now but it used to be it take everything out of the office furniture cables everything and start bringing in one by one whatever was useful and the rest gets out of the kick out of the office and i remember the fascination the first time i saw that because i have never done anything like that again i grow up in a place where you don't throw anything right well these are dry pen yes yes but if you open it and take the ink cartridge maybe you find another broken pen that you can fix that's what i grew up to my dad to this day has buckets of rusty screws okay because maybe that that's the size we need even if it's rusted that said i obviously encourage the spring heavy spring and fall cleaning myself and there is two things that are really important in in my opinion in here one is understand what change okay what change from your personality most of us are constantly changing okay we may not be completely conscious but we are okay the last 12 months for everybody has been extremely challenging okay even if you are good even if you put you been you're everything was disrupted so it is a great time to look at three things that is what i said one is you know what change the second is what is working and there's things that are working things that are working keep it but the last thing is what is not working and look around you know what what you have is not working where is you know what i call the bar okay that level where you don't want to dip below and and i tended to recommend to my clients that they do this in 13 categories okay health learn and growth emotions spiritual life

character love parenting social life and relationships career financial and quality of life and normally i recommend you go in that order and the reason of that is that allows you to go from what you have the most level of control l to what you have the least amount of money control so it is really powerful to go and when you do the cleaning look at all this look at all the things not only that if you are you know you follow my impact journal you are coming to the second set of 13 weeks if you go with a 12 week year you're coming to the next set of 12 weeks so spring cleaning comes in a really good time and it's really important as i said three things and i'm going to repeat them what change for you where you have changed what is working and what is not working and i think everybody should go through this exercise at least once a year

Raymond Sidney-Smith 6:03
yeah i have something fairly simple and similar in the sense that i use the sol susses as well as the equinoxes as my anchor points for my quarterly reviews and in those quarterly reviews so say every four weeks you have a monthly review in i'm following the gtd methodology so of course weekly review to weekly review to weekly review then you get to a monthly review on those sources as well as equinoxes i'm choosing to do a quarterly review and in that quarterly review i'm really looking at an accounting of taking inventory taking stock so to speak and accounting lingo of the ideas behind where am i emotionally this year where am i you know intellectually where am i physically in terms of my organizational system and where am i digitally in terms of my organizational system and that gives me an opportunity to really just look at all of the pieces of the puzzle and get some organization there and i find myself really naturally gravitating toward those moments in my year when i realized that that's when i need time to clean up and it just happens like throughout the year now for those of you who are maybe unawares i do my annual review process in october leading up to november so my personal year starts november one so that's right around that moment of the year where we're where we're switching and so between those solstices and equinoxes i'm i'm looking at it as a mechanism for starting my year four based on the seasons and seasonality around the meter of meteorology meter meteorological calendar and and because of that i feel like i'm kind of more in tune with the movement of the planet and since i'm just a very science focused person i want to i want to do those things based on what's really happening not the more kind of i don't know banal concept of january one right so i just feel more in tune with those pieces plus i was born in november so i figure i'm starting my year when i started on the planet not when someone else told me to so spring cleaning ends up being a really great place for me to be able to look at fine tuning during that that timeframe it's not dramatic in any particular way it is just kind of a you know like a tune up you go take the car in for a tune up you're just making sure that the pieces are there but really those fundamental four corners of where am i mentally emotionally you know where am i intellectually where am i emotionally where am i physically organized and disorganized and where am i digitally organized or disorganized and those really helped me clean up the pieces any final thoughts or tips for viewers and listeners related to their productivity systems and getting organized around save a spring cleaning

Augusto Pinaud 9:01
you said something important this is not a dramatical event this is a tune up this is you know is what did you need to do to perform better what do you need what is the things you know it's like cleaning the car okay you go and we all clean the car once in a while some of us clean it every time we get into the car some of us clean it every three weeks some of us clean it some of us don't clean it okay but but but in general you know people have a certain interval that they go and clean the car is the same thing you do are going to make sure that you have what you need that you get rid of what you don't need that may have come into the system that is now making noise in there but you don't need it it's not going to happen so it is a good thing and if you don't have never gone in and want to some guidance how to do it better hey contact me i will be more than happy to go with you through possibility of how you Can't make that better.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 10:02
Fantastic. And so with some spring cleaning done, let's get into our stories of the week. So each week of course, we cover discuss the productivity news headlines of the week, we try to bubble up, percolate the ones that we think are most important to you. And we cover those in our stories of the week. And so let's get into our stories of the week. What's our first headline in Cousteau?

Augusto Pinaud 10:23
Our first headline is Google made Wi Fi better than Bluetooth. And the articles are quite interesting talks about the new technology that Google is putting on their device that they can share things and they can be aware of how distance it is between one device and the other. And I wonder because lack of technology knowledge, and again, I'm not an Android guy, so but how this is different than what Apple do with. With with airplay. And I don't know, what is the answer to that? I don't even know you know the answer to that. But But I was curious since reading this, saying, Okay, how is this different to what the Apple has had for a while now where you can share files using airplay? And obviously, it was not Bluetooth, otherwise, it could have been available, potentially, to everybody so that technology use something more or something or, or at least at a minimum of technology in the Bluetooth or the Wi Fi. But I have never went back to research the technicalities of how that works. So maybe you maybe you know, maybe you don't.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 11:37
Yeah, this is a proof of concept type app. And in essence, what the folks are doing at Google is proving the case that they can seamlessly create Wi Fi networks between individual applications, which we can do currently in many different manifestations across many devices, we can create, in essence, a temporary Wi Fi network between devices. This is not trivial, though. And that's what this application is hoping to prove. Which is, as we know, we can transmit lots of data very quickly across Wi Fi networks as the primary way in which most people light up their homes in terms of internet connection. They go from a router, they set up a Wi Fi router, or hub connected to that. And that's propagating information. What they're really saying here is that, why do we need to connect with an intermediary, like an individual router that is doing all of the handshaking necessary. Now, with Apple with airplay, it's using multiple technologies in order to make that handshake happen today, that's how Android does it as well, if you want it to be able to share something you needed to and Samsung does this on their devices as well, there needs to be this multiple handshake perspective, to be able to have a secure connection there. Now just deciding to utilize some of the Wi Fi specs, to be able to do that handshake without the need of other other technologies. Meaning that you and I, if we were in vicinity of each other, could now securely transmit information between each other and not have to need our Bluetooth which can you know, be insecure, potentially, depending upon which version of Bluetooth my device runs versus yours. And we can do that with high throughput, meaning that we can, if you and I wanted to play a game together, you and I could play that game without the need for a Wi Fi, especially if we're both on 5g, we're in essence reversing kind of the order of things. Now we have a 5g connection, and we're actually playing simultaneously with each other not through the internet, but through our own protocol, person to person. And so that peer to peer protocol is really what they're trying to prove here. And that's why they built this app is kind of just to show everybody that this could be done. And I think we'll see further use of this model going forward. All right, some more Google News.

Augusto Pinaud 14:05
So our next news comes in Google Chat is starting to add or add granola notification controls. Why this cannot be copied by anybody else, or everybody else, you know, you will be able to get notified always notify less or notification of and you know, it's not a secret the the number of notifications we all get, okay i i get notifications from slack from from clients from Google teams from other clients from you know, text messages, it can get really really taxing and it will

be really awesome to be able to do this much more granular in a right now. You are a binary you can get notifications or not notifications and it will be useful to be able to get, you know us, it is envision right now. Okay? That you get, hey, every mentioned that includes you, you will get the notification, but in at least on the middle tier not far less. But if they just are talking, you will not get that notification. And that will be so useful to to everybody and to reduce the fatigue of the notifications, because there is a moment that everybody just turned them off, can hear any one of them. And then there is the race to miss important stuff.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 15:34
Yeah, so this is available to all tiers of Google workspace. And those of you who are running in the Google workspace space, eventually I presume this will come to Google's consumer, you know, options. So the free tier of Google Chat, but the idea that you can go room by room and reduce the number of notifications so that you can just overall have less noise and more signal, I think is a great productivity boost. So I'm really glad to see it. I went through all of mine. And I set all of my rooms to my notification settings. And I was very happy to do that. I'm on the rapid release schedule. So I got the the update almost immediately and decided to start setting them. And I'm glad I did. Alright, in a rare move of partnership, Google and Microsoft are teaming up on something, what's going on there and gousto?

Augusto Pinaud 16:23
Well, they they're really teaming on trying to make edge and chrome work, fix the compatibility issues, make things work much better. And, you know, Microsoft finally went to project chromium finally make edge in chromium. And they're really trying to bring it to the edge trying to make things better compatible for both. And I love the fact that they're doing this, how long is going to last? Nobody knows. But at least it's a nice good news in that technology world.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 16:56
Well, I think this makes a lot of sense. I mean, they have now gone to this point where Google and Microsoft as well as really the major browsers that are out there, aside from Apple, which has continued to stay in the safari world, and probably will. And that's just the nature of of the apple ecosystem. Those major browsers have have all now been based on chromium, Microsoft Edge, Google Chrome, Opera, brave, you name it, they're all now based on the chromium project, which means that they can actually coordinate some of these efforts and reduce the overall impact, which of course means for us a better, more seamless browsing experience. So, you know, I think that it's just a great note all across the board. So going from Google and Microsoft teaming up to now Microsoft Teams, what's Microsoft Teams doing?

Augusto Pinaud 17:48
team's display will now support customer grounds and live reactions to the meetings.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 17:54
Right. And this is for people who own Microsoft Teams displays, that is the devices themselves. Now, if you have a Microsoft Teams display, you will be able to have custom backgrounds and live reactions in the meetings. And so these are separate devices built by different manufacturers that allow you to be able to do that, which is nice, because you might want to have a dedicated meeting device sitting on your desk, and have that now, put in a background. So that doesn't, you have to show the kids pictures on the wall or whatnot that you don't want to show in a meeting. So really nice to see that. Of course, these Sorry, no as the saying these features are already available in the desktop version. So bringing them to the physical footprint of these bespoke devices, I think is a great new tool, you're gonna say.

Augusto Pinaud 18:44
And I think that's something that many people have learned in the pandemic, and open really a market for these kinds of devices. Because before this, you know, having the separate device

to have the meeting where the meeting will not be distracted, where you can make notes really make a difference in the productivity, you know, I have a couple of stations here in my office, and both have choose two devices. So there is one device that only do the call that doesn't get anything else. And the other one where I'm taking the notes and enables whatever is happening on the interaction, but then it doesn't get come around, come around, come around, come out that it's annoying for the rest of the world. Who is on that meeting?

Raymond Sidney-Smith 19:28
Yeah, I'm really excited here because I have gone to the step of I just bought a new phone. And so I was bought, I bought the new phone. And because I bought it through the Google Store, I get Google credit. You know, I'm a Google one member. So I've been waiting for the credit to like show up in my account, because now I have like enough money as credit in the system to then pay it forward and purchase a new nest hub, whatever the larger nest hub is nest hub, Max or whatever, which has the built in camera, which now means that if I have a Google mini meeting or a zoom meeting, now I can have that on the device exclusively. And it won't be for business meetings, but it's like, you know, when my siblings, we, throughout the whole pandemic, you know, my siblings and I have been meeting, you know, at least one weekend a month, maybe sometimes more often than that, more often than not to just, you know, hang out and spend time and see the see the nieces and nephews and see the, the fur babies. And it's been really nice to be able to engage with each other in that way. But it would be nice to have that dedicated device that just can have everybody on the screen. And especially when I'm here at my desk, I can do that, in that in that way. And or if my mother wants to call me, she can call me from her phone, and it'll, it'll show up on the display. And I can have now that dedicated video device. So the more that these devices kind of make their way into your world, the more you see the use of them. And they become much more productive, because you're able to do these extended things that you really wouldn't have thought about doing before the pandemic. And so I'm really, I'm really pleased to see these new uses coming onto onto the market and the devices being able to have the capacity to do these kinds of things that I think I mean, like, you know, at&t back in the 60s was it you know, they told us talks about the video phone concept in the in the future world, you know, display. And now here we are with truly the ability to now have face to face phone calls, and in these devices sitting on your desk, or on your kitchen counter, or whatnot. And I'm really pleased to see this coming up. All right, moving right along to some unfortunate news for Microsoft Cortana users, which is that Microsoft has decided to announce that Cortana on Android and iOS will be discontinued. And so this has been in an in our discussions of certainly over the past six months, you've heard us talking about this, which is that Cortana is going away in the traditional consumer sense. And so just be mindful of the fact that you're going to see more and more of Cortana disappear from the front end of Microsoft. And that means on the enterprise side, you'll see more of Cortana being baked into other things. But the reality is, is that Cortana is days have been numbered for a long time, Microsoft is hasn't been able to challenge Google Assistant, or the Amazon line of devices or the apple assistant. And so here we are, with Cortana really getting another nail put into the

Augusto Pinaud 22:26
word you can say freely on a podcast and will not wake up anybody's device that understand what you say, has been number one we're number even before he was out. But

Raymond Sidney-Smith 22:35
I was actually very pleased with what Cortana could do in the early days. And and so it's sad now to see that it they scaled back. I mean, it's very similar to the Windows Phone concept. You know, Microsoft really made a strong play out early on, and they saw the lack of viability and pulled back. And I felt as though they could have probably pushed forward a little bit harder and maybe made. Maybe they wouldn't have been the dominant phone on the planet ever. But they could have been a third of the market, maybe 20% of the market if they really

kept pushing some some there. But the reality is, is that you know, Microsoft is playing a much bigger game than simply you know, playing on the consumer market for mobile devices. So Alright, a little bit of hacking news. A little bit of Grammarly. Let's do let's do the hackers news. What's going on there?

Augusto Pinaud 23:26
Oh, well, you know, hackers has been using infected websites to get into iOS devices. There is a new iOS that update that came out emergency update to 14 point 2.1. So if you have not update, please do.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 23:45
This is 14 point 4.2. Right.

Augusto Pinaud 23:47
14 point 4.2. Yes,

Raymond Sidney-Smith 23:49
yeah, yeah, I got that update. And I've I've applied my patch.

Augusto Pinaud 23:54
So if you have not applied your patch, and you know, it's it's really the only reason this news was there was to really tell people if you have not update your patch.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 24:05
Yeah, and while while I'm on my soapbox here, really quick PSA. Today I got an email from some random person random because I knew the person but ever so vaguely. And it's one of those clear scams where someone's email was compromised and they were sending me a message oh my gosh, you know this thing this situations happening? Can you can you purchase a gift card on my behalf? And I'll reimburse you that kind of scam nonsense. Just note that I've been hearing a lot of people experiencing this recently. I don't know why. But just anecdotally, I've heard a lot of people telling me Hey, I recently got this and I've had to tell them, just delete the message. You know, do not respond, do not allow, you know, do not do anything. Don't click on links, because it just seems that it's a it's happening a lot more for some reason. That being the case. If you get any emails that just seems strange that someone's asking you to do something that would be weird. Now's the time to be a little bit more scrupulous with regard to the email you know study a little bit more contact the person via some other methods like calling them or messaging them through Twitter or something like that to see whether or not they are actually the person sending you that message because it's likely not it's likely some kind of hoax or spam. All right, moving right along to Grammarly,

Augusto Pinaud 25:22
Grammarly now have available for iOS and iPhone at tone detectors so they will Grammarly. Fantastic, it will fix your grammar fixed all this, but now it tells you it's analyzing your texts and telling you what kind of tone you're using. You know, it's funny because in a lot of that's a joke that it's been for a year some text messages, you know, when you respond, especially with close friends more than business but you know, and the person responded back and say which tone and you're reading this message, I think you read the wrong one. So, you know, it's it made me laugh more than anything else I have not tested but it is. But it's used used to Grammarly on the iPhone on the Android, you know, this, this will this could be useful, you know, especially now the text happens more we're trying to make it happen even more.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 26:15
Yeah, and this was already available in the desktop versions of the browser extensions that people were using. Now they've brought this to both iOS and Android within the mobile

applications, which is fantastic. And so that brings us to our halfway point in the show, and we will be back after the break with more of our headlines this week. But first a word from our sponsor, productivity voice. See you after the break?

Sponsor Voice Over 26:41
Are you feeling that you need help implementing a personal productivity system a goal or a habit like the weekly review? Do you need help making your current system more robust? Do you want a quick checkup of your current systems to ensure they are the best solutions for you? With more than 20 years of experience in technology, personal productivity and GTD productivity voice can help you review, renew, create or fine tune your system and your personal productivity. Visit productivity voice comm forward slash Anything But Idle for a free 30 minute consultation. Let's achieve more enjoy more and feel more wins in the game of being productive. Head over to productivity voice comm forward slash Anything But Idle today. And now back to the show.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 27:33
Welcome back everybody to Anything But Idle. I'm Ray Sidney-Smith. And I'm with Augusto Pinaud. And we are starting our second half of the show with more headlines. And so with that, Augusto, what is our first headline in our second half of the show.

Augusto Pinaud 27:48
The first headline is not a goal from Leah Yaki that says how I skyrocket my productivity without burnout. And there's a couple of things I like about this article, you know, and is the fact that she openly said not all productivity strategies work with it for everybody. And I think that's so important because we tend to people tend to believe that because it worked for them, it will work for for everybody else or because you prefer to work, you know, as I do on iOS, then the other platforms are not as powerful and far from the truth. So anyways, he goes into this article talks about, you know, a couple of things you talk about the park solo, the park, King from law, okay, that is working will expand to the time available for its completion. You know, most of our listeners has listened to that experience that and suffer that. But the other one she she mentioned is one that she calls, the 85% rule is do dedicated 85% effort those whatever you're doing, instead of 100%. And you get the work done without burning out and Chico when when I I don't know. I don't I don't know about this working 85% or two by 85%. I don't know if you know, I remember in my sales years, you know, you used to say that 95% and zeros around the same. So

Raymond Sidney-Smith 29:28
no, but she's, she's she's really saying I mean the article. She goes into this. And I actually appreciate her explanation here. Because what she's really saying is that sometimes when we think we have to push 100%, we're really saying to ourselves, we need to push 110% especially those of us who are productivity minded, we hold ourselves to really high standards. And that gets us from starting in the first place. And so what she really is saying if you set the bar lower, you're setting the standard for failure, lower and therefore some of the pressure gets relieved and From my perspective, it's just about starting. And so this is a gimmick to be able to get you started. But if it's effective for you, I have no problem with that. And I think that's where she's getting at is the starting component, not the completing component. She's She's worried about starting,

Augusto Pinaud 30:13
maybe, maybe and she goes to is the other thing, do you know, do it for five minutes are set up to five minutes, maybe maybe you're right. I, again, was a good article, good to read. But I don't know some of those things.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 30:27

And I also actually really enjoyed, you know, she talks about Mark Manson's concept of finger reading, that's where she learned about it. I mean, I learned about it back then, you know, late 80s, early 90s. And so, but the idea of using your finger as a guide, when you're reading, it's a it's a phenomenal tool for those of you who are having issues with regard to reading. And what we don't realize is that many times when we're reading, we are distracted or distractible, we're interrupted by things. And so having your finger kind of identifying where you are not only allows you to be able to stay focused, but it also actually allows you to speed up what you were reading, because you don't realize how slow you're reading something until you see your see something moving across. Your eyes are not necessarily designed to read, so to speak, right there. They're designed to take in visual cues, and do what it needs to do. But reading is is a is an is a skill that if you don't, if you don't read a lot, you're going to have issues with obviously, reading efficiently. And so the finger really gives you a chance to build up those muscles for being able to read efficiently. And so it was a really good tip there for being able to do finger reading. So just like following the line you're reading, and effectively, going across the line really does help train your eyes, especially if you have say, you know, a particular lazy eye, that kind of thing that that doesn't quite track at the same speed as the other eye, those can be really helpful for being able to give you a visual cue as to where you should be focusing your attention. That's really good. Okay, next up, tool.

Augusto Pinaud 32:02
Next up is a tool from eurocity. And eurocity, basically, came with a device called the crown you put on your hand will be measured energy will measure your brainwaves. And it can tell when you are distracted when you are focused and connect with your Spotify. So he helps you, you know, it's using artificial intelligence helps you keep that focus for longer. It's I was really intrigued until I see the price tag. But

Raymond Sidney-Smith 32:38
that's nearly $1,000 1000 bucks.

Augusto Pinaud 32:40
So. But aside of that, you know, that's the first one I read the due date. So it may not be the last one. But aside of the price, it was really interesting to to see you know, it is it is really interesting how these devices and how these measurements and all these are coming to our day to day live, you know what all the things that you can now measure on an apple watch or, or an Android watch and under aware. And where we are going to take our we're taking it. And that's really, really fascinating for me. So let's see where it is technology takers, and what's going to happen next.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 33:25
Yeah, so I would give a comparison between the crown which is $1,000 brainwave technology to the Muse and the Muse to this is a headband that does the same thing, not the same thing. But it basically does brain sensing technology in some way shape, or form, and allows you to be able to meditate and use it for all kinds of other purposes. So I would look at the Muse tube that's running you only 200 odd dollars USD. So it's definitely worth, you know, thinking about that product over the others. I know some folks who have gotten the Muse and I've been very pleased with it. But the idea is, is that allows you to meditate, and you know, use it in that in that way, I'd be curious to see whether or not it actually can connect to music over time, I haven't seen anything about it connecting to music other than the guided meditation that's built into the application that connects to it. But it has an accelerometer, it has a pulse oximeter, it has, you know, the, I'm not sure whether it has an ECG in it, but it has some kind of, you know, measurement for, for heart rate. And so it's a pretty neat device. And, again, predominantly focused on meditation and focus. And so I'm just curious how the crown and the Muse matchup or the Muse to match up to each other, but I would go with something more like the Muse over the crown because I can just play music. I don't need someone to play

Spotify for me. So I don't really see the see the great use there. Alright, moving right along to our next story this week, which is a lot of woowoo probably works. What's that all about you so You are muted.

Augusto Pinaud 35:05
On our 35 minutes. Anyway, he talks about how some, you know, it is it is interesting because he talks in this particular case about meditation, Reiki energy healing, but then it goes to really where was interesting and are things that worked before we know how they work and, and how acceptance of new ideas is the last thing that happened and talks about this the Stage and Stage One, nobody knows stage two, you know, some people do, some people don't, you know, Now, some people start believing this work and stage four, you know, years of research finally make it to the world. And now less people is doubting, and this is interesting, especially, you know, in, in the line of the article about energy healing and meditation and Reiki and, and these things and how they're making their way into into our natural, you know, it used to be a really clear distinction between what the west and the east, you know, the orange believe, and what was one or the other, you know, and we are seeing finally coming to a more mixed of them, you know, where the preventive met, the preventive medicine has a value as well as the traditional what we call traditional medicine, and how really using both, you can get more of them. So enjoyable article, to be honest with you.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 36:36
I think I think that science doesn't have boundaries when it comes to these things. And many of our Ancient Medicine needs to be validated in some way, shape, or form. And it's because it hasn't been given credence out the gate, people tend to think of it as being, you know, unsubstantiated and therefore pseudo science or pseudo medicine, we'll run it through scientific rigor, let's, let's look at the research, I frequently find myself kind of appalled by the fact that people, dog the idea of, you know, if someone, someone thinks that they're going to get better, that's somehow a bad thing. And we know that determination, and willpower, and these kinds of things are just good for people having hope is good. I'm not I'm not against people having hope. We want scientifically validated cures, we want good medicine, but we shouldn't be turning our backs on potentially good things. We know there's a lot of Ancient Medicine that needs to be studied. So we can see whether or not it works. If it doesn't work. Well, I'm happy to have science tell us that. But if it does work, then I don't want to turn our back on it. You know, there's penicillin, you know, any number of things come from nature. And so why not look at other things that could potentially come from that? And what's the what's the effect that it's escaping me right now, the idea that if you placebo effect, that was what I was thinking of, you know, people frequently forget that the placebo effect works. It's not like it's, it's like, this is not like, Oh, this is, you know, some kind of woowoo thing. The placebo effect actually works in a lot of categories of work. And what we're trying to understand is how placebo effect works against other treatments. If I believe that I'm going to get better at something, that's not to say that I will. But there are certain cases where that is the case. And we should, we should want science to validate those things. I'm, I'm as dedicated to science as the next person. But I think we spend a lot of time trying to be us against them, as opposed to no everything is subject to us studying it for those purposes. And when it doesn't work, we should call it out. And then we look at other ways to be able to help people live better lives. But I feel like this whole notion that we should be thinking about things as being us versus them is, you know, yeah, as as Julie's noting in in here, there have been several studies on how the placebo effect works, even without the blinding of the person to the fact that they are they are taking a placebo, the placebo placebo effect can work even if you know you're getting the placebo. So we have seen countless experiences of that happening. And that's really phenomenal. I think it's just it's strange. But it's great to know that that's the case. So I'm going to get off my soapbox there and let's move on to our next story. Agusta what's our next story?

Augusto Pinaud 39:29
Next story it's called the to schedule method methods to better time management and your time is pressure on should you should be the one is the day before routine and this method basically requires you to sit down the night before and list your objectives and you know, that is really useful for for everybody. There are other one is so claim as You go, you know, and I, my life requires a lot more organization than plan as you go. No, I know people who can plan the next four hours and be more productive than what I can be, but my life requires a lot more. So I can work with the stress under time and the planning and, and all that. So I, for one play the night before, you know, plan my day plan my goals, and all that I am not great at saying no, let's plan it hasn't come in. It's not. It's not that I don't do it. But I don't feel that my days are as good or as productive when I do it that way. versus when I go the night before and plan, you know, what are the goals? What is what I expect to accomplish and everything else?

Raymond Sidney-Smith 40:49
Yeah, and I think this again, ends up being an East meets West argument, I think that I do a little bit of both, I follow and have always adhered to the idea of planning at the end of my day for the subsequent day. So I have some closing up of my current day. And even when my days have been of late ending very, very late, I've still spend the time to just close up my day. But then throughout the course of my day, I'm still doing the practice of really checking in with my work where I am and making course correction making adjustments as I go. And I think you're doing the same thing. I think that what they're really talking about is being a little bit more loosey goosey with regard to how they're working.

Augusto Pinaud 41:31
Correct. And I'm that's what I did they readjusted need to happen. No plan will, you know, they said that they rock it to the moon is adjusted every 60 seconds, okay, it's you need to adjust your day with your plan and you adjusted to the day so you can get to the end of it. What I get from the article was a lot more loose than that, you know, you do go by the seat of your pants, and I cannot go by the seat of my pants is will never get anywhere. Yeah. And there are people who can do it into the couch and read and drink coffee. But

Raymond Sidney-Smith 42:03
yeah, some people could do it, some people can't. I think that for me all things kind of mixed in moderation. I like the hybrid of being able to have the flexibility to be dynamic in and as a part of my day. And so even as I approach my day with a plan, I know that things can change. And I'd have to throw out one plan and replace it with another. And I feel like having a strong system gives me that capability. And I'm appreciative of the work that I put in to making sure that I can do so. And so for those of you who are out there, just know that that is a possibility that you can have a fairly structured plan for your days and for your weeks and still change and still be productive on the other side of each week. And that's the way in which I look at it. Okay, Harper's Bazaar put out an article about with the question is productivity passe embrace the power of doing less? i? i both enjoy reading these articles and hate them at the same time. I don't hate anything, but I dislike them. At the same time. What did you think about this article? Because

Augusto Pinaud 43:13
the reality is the article, I love how the article starts saying, Well, I was going to write 1000 words, write one and then reward myself, you know, under this and that. And Dude, I have done that. Yes. But I have not done that. Because my productivity system, I can go and review and know what's going to explode between now and 11am next morning, and then I can decide that the best and most appropriate things to do is go with my kid and play. But he's because I have us productivity system. What allows me to do that, even when I feel you know, that is falling apart? And yes, there are moments and mine feels like it's falling apart again need that to know that weekly review to turn up and and tied up what needs to be title. It is really

that what allows me to have that kind of flexibility and what allows me to enjoy flexibility. So this articles, you know, it is there okay, but they are really looking into how can I get three more readers and I don't know, I believe you need some kind of productivity system if you want to, to get things done. And yeah, I understand not everybody wants, you don't want to great, but if you want to get things done, you may need one.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 44:40
I think that the central thesis of the article was that there's a sense of mindfulness that is afforded one when you take the means to get there. And for me having a productivity system is what facilitates my ability to do frequently as david allen says about the getting things done methodology which is that getting things done is not so much about getting things done as knowing what you're not doing and my ability to be able to set things aside gives me the ability to focus and be present and if presence is kind of the aim here then i'm not quite sure productivity is passe for me because productivity means my ability to be present i don't have to think about all of the other things that i would could should do at this very moment because i am here and by being here i don't have to be anywhere else because i have a good system in place and that's truly what i define as productivity in my own world and so this notion that somehow productivity can become passe i think that when we take things to extremes where everybody wants to eke out more time out of every day when time is immutable you can't you can't create more time time not at least on this planet you know without extreme forms of time dilation and let's not get into you know colliders and the ability to smash particles and quantum physics right but like we can't change the time you know space and so our space time that is so why why are we having this dialogue when in reality presence that is mindfulness and productivity work together in that way so the whole notion that somehow these are things in conflict and one can fall into passe ness you know seems a little bit trite to me but i appreciated the article like i said i i enjoyed the article because it was it helped me think about yeah well why do i do this and it reminded me why i did it right which is that i have a good system so that i can be here now and if i can't be here now that i'm torn into the past or the future and that really helps me bring myself to now right and and julie's bringing up a really great point here which is she thinks is also an indictment of the our productivity at all costs ethos and and i think i think you're absolutely right you know we tend to think of this as being a belief system that must be true that whatever i'm doing if everyone does it or if i do it i'm going to have some kind of grand edge over the rest of us and and we don't we don't we just need to live good lives for our own purposes and and we'll be fine i think i think ultimately will be fine julie's also noting that of course we need goals but the issue that that to live a life where our only form of sustenance seems to be to achieve is to miss out on the richness of all life has to offer yeah i mean like you know they they it sounds kind of funny like oh you know life is the journey not the destination but the reality is is that so much of our experience is now and if we think too much about the past or the future we are we're missing out on a core chunk of what our experience is and as far as i'm aware we only get this one experience so i think that it's important for us to be able to do so so thank you for for those thoughts julie and moving right along then to our next article this week you are muted once again two for two

Augusto Pinaud 48:24
that's what happened when you start adding more technology and more mouse's and you know the next article it's a book conversation with the author of the new book remote work revolution succeeding from anywhere and miss needy i'm not even going to try to pronounce her name because i'm going to butcher i apologize but you know it is it is a really the reality is as much as you know i laugh every time i read in the newspaper oh we are all going to come back and it's going to be like it was in 1999 sorry 2019 that's what it feels like the line they're saying the reality is remote work is here to stay it's going to change we are not going to maybe stay in where we are we are going to adopt something different but it's not going to go back to where it was because not employees not companies want to period you know we for years hear how remote work was going to kill productivity and we show exactly the opposite but not

only that many people as as many people have discovered they don't like it there is a significant amount of people who have discover many benefits and many bright sides out of this so the book i haven't read the book i ordered the book i have not received it but the book has an interview between blending and misses nearly into what the books are what the what is her study she has started about three years before COVID so it's not the last year she's been looking into this for a while now i'm looking forward to be able to read it in detail

Raymond Sidney-Smith 50:04
yeah i think that one of the core components of what she talked about i caught the back end of her recent live event back on the 24th so i didn't actually get to see the whole thing so i caught only a short portion of the end of that event and i will also read the book but i haven't yet and the notion behind it all though is that she really talks about trust as being a core component of how you go into a virtual world and i couldn't agree with her more i think that if employers can learn to trust performance and and trust outcomes as opposed to you know time in but you know but in chair time in essence you know like that's that's got to really be understood on a fundamental level is not being an appropriate measure of what is labor productivity today and so i'm really pleased to see people have been working on this i'm pleased to see this this researcher coming out and putting out more material on it and i'm looking forward to reading the book all right next up got two more stories in our headlines this week though

Augusto Pinaud 51:04
the title of this one's five ways to find more time to read and you know i can get any help that i can that i can find to read more i love to read is one of those things that remove a stress for me so i love that and you know they talk about the five things they mentioned is set a reading goal drop the false finish should be reading notions you know enjoy the book and in read variaty read whatever you want you know use the other side of the screens you know not your habits and track your progress and track your progress when i read that remind me you know we have old amazon kindles for for kids and and the reason for that is they are allowed to take it to bed i don't need to be worried about the plane okay dad's devices they can read book for nothing i have it amazon has a great thing for listeners whose kids that is called kinetic kids limited so they have access to a significant amount of books plus the books we buy and last year at the end of the year the teacher asked us to send a report of what my son had read okay and i wish to tell you i knew exactly what he was reading okay but that was not true but when i went to amazon and pulled a report the teacher was impressed how much it is because it's the only thing they can take the bat so the reason i begin reading digitally before kindle and all that was exactly that i can carry that book to this day in my pocket so we have with reading and writing sometimes a wrong perspective that we need a long period of time to make it happen and yes sitting in the couch with a big cup of coffee and read for two hours this is still one of my favorite things to do how many of those two hours blocked i have not that many how many 1520 minutes blocks i have many more how many five minutes to 10 i have even bigger in the number so said that reading go you know enjoy it and find when you can look for those pockets of time so you can read more

Raymond Sidney-Smith 53:29
yeah a couple tips here one is have a dedicated time to read even if it is just 10 minutes a day i think it's helpful to have an anchor point and you can always move that time around and you know try different times to see what sticks for you i am a huge fan of the single purpose device that is the kindle and whether that's a notebook or you know whatever other ereader you use having that limited function single purpose device is really powerful it tells me that when i'm reading i'm just reading and it allows me to take notes it allows me to highlight items but i'm not doing anything but reading and that's very very helpful for me in terms of context

Augusto Pinaud 54:10

yeah and it's funny because you have said this about your kindle you know in this show and many shows so i pulled mine out of the dust and set the rule that the ipads don't go to the they're not allowed in in the room anymore and i have been reading a lot more to because of that so i tend to read when i go to bed and not having the ipad give me that give me more time to do that

Raymond Sidney-Smith 54:37
absolutely and then finally i always talk about the idea that you can have multiple books in process now what i try to do is i try to keep those multiple books in different categories so i'm not going to read multiple fiction books because you're going to you're going to have a difficulty tracking the storylines the narratives of multiple fiction books or at least i have difficulty in that way and i don't feel like i'm making enough progress in the narrative if i'm reading only 10 minutes here 10 minutes there of any fiction piece in the nonprofit space and suffering in the nonfiction space i'm thinking about this from the perspective of i try to keep all of the nonfiction books in completely different areas so i might have two or three nonfiction books in process but they're not all going to be business books i might have one that's in the productivity space time management research kind of space i might have one in the digital marketing space because that's what i do for work and teach people how to do digital marketing and small business categories i'm going to i'm going to have different books in process but they don't overlap in terms of their discussions so i'm going to be able to keep those pieces pretty well contained and so don't worry so much about having multiple books in process i like to actually do my kind of leisure book nonfiction wise in audiobook format while doing my work one in kindle format that's reading only and then my fiction work i tend to read on on the kindle as i'm reading reading it not listening to it but sometimes i might listen to it and read it as well one quick tip is that if you do find yourself not having good concentration download one of the library applications libby is the most popular one that runs on the overdrive system but there's hoopla there's other ones out there you can frequently get the audio book application associated with the book you're reading so it's actually reading it to you while you're reading it on page and you can just click it up a couple notches from 1x to maybe 1.25x or 1.5x and now you're reading just a little bit faster because you're pacing with what you're hearing against the page and that of course increases your reading speed over time so just some helpful hints to get a little bit more reading and then you might otherwise and i know a lot of people struggle with distraction and interruption and being able to have that audio facilitating and supporting you while you're listening while you're reading that is can be really helpful all right our final story in our headlines the pesto

Augusto Pinaud 57:07
so the final story is how to manage your personal use of the internet in your workplace and it's a really in depth article with the risk and i don't know how relevant is still anymore in the sense that everybody has a computer in their pocket or most people have one at least in the united states but there is a couple of things that i the reason i decided to keep it there were two reasons one is to remind people you know that you can get to what they call cyber often you know that hey you're surfing the web and get distracted and i have been talking about this for many many years you know learn to use multiple browsers use one browser for work one browser personal because that allows you to reduce that you know the article called cyber luffy the the other side

Raymond Sidney-Smith 57:59
also note from last week we talked about chrome profiles so now you can have one browser and have multiple profiles and you can in essence the chrome the chrome look is a different color so you can have different color different you know profile image so you can really separate personal and work or even different aspects of your life you could have you know 13 different profiles even so got a lot of function and flexibility there sorry continue

Augusto Pinaud 58:23
no and and that is really really important the other thing you know is yeah companies are going to protect their bandwidth you know they're going to watch what you what you do so this article for me again i don't know how much people navigate into their work computer to do this i mean obviously enough to you know for these kinds of articles but you know just be mindful to what you're doing i don't know i i have seen it in places where you are not allowed to use this and what i see then is the people with a personal computer on their phone on the side on the thing so you know with unlimited plans and all these things i don't know really if what we need is to educate people or what we need is to lock the systems even more

Raymond Sidney-Smith 59:21
yeah i think it's about again going back to the prior article about the future of virtual work is trusting employees and giving them meaningful work people will be highly motivated if we give them meaningful work and if we trust them to get that work done and when they infrequently you know as it might happen disappoint us there are ramifications for that there are negative consequences for not getting the work done but for the most part people aren't going to disappoint you they are motivated to do meaningful work and so with that that closes out our headlines for this week and brings us on to the new tools of the week so Augusto and i come across many produce personal productivity tools and services each week and so in new tools of the week we each bring you a tool we think you might like now may not be absolutely new but it's hopefully new to some of you and hopefully you'll enjoy it so this week we have two tools our first tool is my tool of the week and that is unroll.me and so unroll.me is actually a fairly old established mature tool and what it does is it allows you to connect your inbox to the service and then unroll me basically goes through and sorts out the subscription based emails from all of the rest of the stuff and so now you get this one singular email daily that gives you a roll up of all of the various emails that you have subscribed to and then it says to you hey do you want to keep this stuff or do you want to kind of purge this stuff and you can unsubscribe from things or you can just have it not show it to you so you don't have to see it and this is incredibly useful google as well as other services have functionality built in them in them in them for being able to sort and unsubscribe from things but i've just found unroll.me to be really useful for being able to just clean all that stuff up especially with an email inbox as old as i do it's just been around a long time i don't want to get rid of the inbox but i also don't want to see all of those subscriptions but once in a while i want to go hunting for something so say like okay i want to go to bed bath and beyond and do a shopping trip i can go into my email and still find it even though i never want to see those emails unless i'm looking for it and so unroll.me is really helpful for that particular use case alright gousto what is your new tool this week i think you are muted

Augusto Pinaud 1:01:56
three out of three do you know that strike out right i get booed out of the show so calendly is my application for the week and we were talking about sprinklin at the beginning and as you were you know calendly it's an application that allows people to look into your calendar you allows you to set your availability and the kinds of meetings you want to have and people can book directly into your calendar it is interesting to me how in 2021 we are trying to set a meeting that is conducted in five to 10 emails coming back and forward is 3pm works 2pm work fun pm work instead of here is the link you will have access to my whole calendar let me know as you can find something so if you are one of those people who struggle with calendar hey this is your solution i mentioned a case on this that i believe to these days brilliant and it is the ceos the microphones philosophy you want to meet with him okay he has times for meeting with the ceo of nosb and is available to all his customers they will get an email that will give him a good bunch of places made with him and he just basically have a couple of slots in his calendars that are pre blocked for that so if you are a customer you want to talk to him do that imagine you know for our listeners how many people can now come and have that conversation and what you're going to gain out of having those really valuable conversations

with clients with clients with friends everything else so i use calendly if you ask me let's meet i will forward your link and you can now look at my calendar look at yours make your best decision without every party involved into that decision

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:03:59
fantastic i use something akin to calendly and have for many many years and it just saves so much time it really does and i've only had a few instances of people not wanting to use the tool and really it's just a matter of if if four people every year don't want to use the tool or are technologically not sophisticated enough to be able to use the tool that's only for meetings that i have to manually schedule versus the hundreds of meetings that happen throughout my year that just get automatically placed into the calendar based on my rules and my approval of those calendar events with just seamless capability so tools like calendly are such a great time saver and and yeah i just can't i can't say more highly of using tools like calendly that get you things onto your calendar so with new tools of the week out of the way let's move on to our featured story this week at gousto which is understanding microsoft viva

Augusto Pinaud 1:05:00
write code and didn't need to talk about Microsoft. I try, I try. Microsoft Viva, there is a long article and Tom talks talking about the, what they know. And they have found we have continue finding about Microsoft Viva. But basically Microsoft Viva will be for products, connections, insights, topics and learning. So one dedicated to culture and communications when they're going to try to integrate teams and jammer and some of those tools that they have acquired over the years productivity and well being where you're going to get analytics and stuff, knowledge and expertise that I'm going to assume that is aversion or diversion, new version of lynda.com, acquired by LinkedIn and then acquired by them, and finally, skill and growth. So they are going to have these four modules that you will be able to add to your office 365. And hopefully, it's going to allow your employees to have much more complete Microsoft experience.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:06:02
Yeah, so they're calling this an employee experience platform or an ESP. And they're really bringing all of these communications well being learning and knowledge discovery tools into this one kind of brand. And there will be a wide variety of different plans for the various modules that will be included within Office 365, Microsoft 365, as well as exchange. And my greater curiosity here is that with these four different fundamental groupings of tools, I'm just really curious where Microsoft sees this fitting in the grander, really corporate ecosystem for employees. And I'm just fascinated by what they really feel like this will do for employers to help employees be more productive. And from my perspective, there are a lot of pieces here where really the ultimate goal is to collect data about employees, so that they can provide them with information and surface that information appropriately like you know, in an appropriate timeframe, so that employees can then engage with that content, which will then give more data to the system, which will then help both individuals as well as the employers, the managers, and the employers see whether or not that makes people more or less productive. And by doing so, we're really creating this hopefully virtuous cycle and not creepy monitoring, you know, kind of world where people can actually be more productive because they're being given the right information at the right time to be productive. And so it has kind of big bridges to fill in the sense that it's a, it's a tall order to see how much Viva is trying to take on all at once. Right, Viva connection connections itself trying to be able to surface this SharePoint portal in this particular way. And then, of course, Viva insights, which is just data analytics and information being, you know, kind of pipelined into these dashboards, both for the individuals and for the managers. But then, you know, like, they're using AI for being able to pull up and surface information and then learning, which is, in essence, tying not only into LinkedIn learning, but also into Saba, and these other connected platforms, these third party platforms that are trying to infuse the system with data. Viva is is very interesting to me. And it makes me

think about what Microsoft's long game here is for their ability to keep their corporate clients happy for how much they're spending on subscription, versus how much the spending for having software of yesteryear, you bought a license to office to word PowerPoint, Excel, and maybe access or, you know, publisher, the other various tools, and then you owned it. And you would own it for six, seven years, maybe 10 years before you upgraded to the next version, Microsoft's gone to this 365 platform where they're expecting people to have to pay every month and every year for each user seat. And so they're trying to provide more value on top of that on a continual basis. And it seems like Viva is their next kind of push to build to say, Hey, I know you're paying for these pieces. But look at all of the extra value that we can now provide you because we're collecting all of this data.

Augusto Pinaud 1:09:27
Well, you need to look at all these extra value we can provide you if you pay a little bit more per seat.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:09:34
Well, I mean, Viva is giving away some tear for free of most of these products to 365, licensees and so that that's a I don't think it's just a modicum of additional value. It's actually an appropriate amount of additional value. And then they're saying if you want more if you want to really go deeply into this, then you can go ahead and upgrade to get greater features. I don't think I have a problem with that. I mean it obviously costs money for them to be able to make Make these platforms, you know, run and stay sound. And so I see Viva being a really interesting platform. I don't know, if I were an employee that I would certainly like it as much from the perspective that it does seem like they're collecting a lot of data about me. And it kind of pushes up against my creepy factor, like, seems creepy. But at the same time, I also if it gave me the data analytics that I'm really interested in seeing, if I worked in a complete Microsoft environment, I kind of want to know that data. And that's me personally, I like to see data. And so I feel tugged by those two competing forces,

Augusto Pinaud 1:10:38
I agree, I agree is going to be a matter if they make it actual, virtuous, or vicious.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:10:45
Again, that's up to the employer, right, I think the employer ultimately makes that decision. Microsoft is just providing the platform, and you know, they're providing the hammer, what to do with the hammer. It's unfortunately up to the employer here. And so good employers will not abuse this. But we're obviously you know, give it six months, give it nine months, you'll hear us talking about how employers are either using this for good or for ill, it's just gonna come out in the wash. So if you are an employer, and you're listening to us, feel free to just not do creepy, stupid stuff with Viva. And that will probably keep you out of us talking about you on Anything But Idle in the future.

Unknown 1:11:25
With that, okay, so

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:11:27
any final comments or thoughts about Viva? Well, then with that, we've covered the productivity news for this week. We've done it again, thanks, Augusto for helping me each and every week, bring Anything But Idle to listeners.

Augusto Pinaud 1:11:42
It's my pleasure is always fun.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:11:45

Fantastic. So that's a gousto pinout. And that brings us to the end of our show, if we missed a story, we do collect additional stories, we don't cover every story on the show every week. We do put those into an extra story section in our show notes. But if we didn't miss a story for some reason, go over to Anything But Idle COMM And you can go ahead and let us know either by visiting the episode page, or you can go to Twitter, we are at Anything But Idle. You also can find at least one myself on our on our individual Twitter profiles. But you can go to Anything But Idle you can tweet or dm us there. And we'll see the messages. If a question or comment about anything we discussed during the show, please feel free to leave a comment on Anything But Idle comm on the episode page. So this is Episode 51. So if you go to Anything But Idle comm forward slash 051, you will find the episode, it'll just naturally take you to that episode page, you can go ahead and leave a comment or question there. While you're on Anything But Idle, you'll also find our show notes, which includes links to all the stories we cover this week, including the extra stories tools of the week. And so our new tools of the week are there and a text transcript that's provided both in PDF for downloads, you can download it and listen along on the page. Or you can actually click on that little Read More link on the Anything But Idle page, and it'll actually expand the transcript. It's a machine generated transcript, but it'll help you get along and know what we're talking about as you're tracking along with the audio in the episode. If this is your first time listening to us on the live stream, feel free to click the subscribe button that'll help get you notified about future live shows. And then of course, if you're listening in the podcast, feel free to subscribe follow whatever the terminology is these days. But it allows you to be able to for free download or access to new episodes when we put them out and we put them out the day after we do the show live here on Mondays. So thank you everybody for watching and listening to Anything But Idle each week. And so with that, see you all next time here on Anything But Idle history, productive life.