Northstar: Episode 2

Transcript

Will: Yeah, put it into my environment so that way my environment supports me.

Show Introduction

Bonnie: Hello, I'm Bonnie Prestridge and this is the North Star Podcast.

I'm a life coach for young people in their teens, twenties and thirties, plus their families who feel stranded or lost in life. If that sounds like you, this show is here to be a guiding light, to help you expand the horizons of what's possible for your life and build the practical skills to get there.

In this show, we ditch the try harder and think positive mindsets of the mainstream self improvement world for an approach to life that's more authentic, more effective and way more fun. If you're ready, let's get going.

Episode

B: Hey, welcome to the first season of our podcast, the theme of which is brains and bodies,

where we'll be talking about how to do life when your brain or body is different from the mainstream. Our first guest is Will, someone who I know quite well and whose perspective on this topic I've always appreciated. He will be talking about his brain and it'll be especially relevant to anyone who identifies with ADHD, learning disabilities, or things related to executive functioning. He is in his thirties, went to college, and has been in the full time workforce for about 15 years in the tech sector.

The first part of our conversation will be about the joys and challenges of growing up with the brain that he has. And in the second part, he'll be telling us some fun stories and opening up his toolkit to share unconventional tips and tricks for doing life. I hope that you enjoy this conversation as much as I did.

B: Hey Will, thanks for being here with me today

.

W: Hi Bonnie.

B: So the topic of our podcast this season is brains and bodies. So we're talking to folks with health conditions, chronic illnesses, disabilities, neurodivergences, all kinds of things. So given that that is the thrust of our podcast, I'm curious to know what is your personal connection

with this theme of brains and bodies?

W: Yeah, for a long, long time, I've known that the way my brain works is different than a lot of other people. I knew that the way that I went about school was very different from

all of my other classmates.I oftentimes would not have homework because I would have already done my homework in class while paying attention kind-of sort-of not really, you know,

like, but I know that I've got, like I've always been really interested in how memory works because I know that my own memory is weird. You know, it also turns out everyone's memory is weird, but, but like, when I was growing up, I could not remember anything that was important.

My mom used to actually pin important documents to my shirt because if she gave them to

my, me in my hand and I put them into the backpack, they disappeared and I never thought of them again, like truly out of sight out of mind. And I forgot, and that was like legitimately embarrassing cause I'm like, yeah, yeah, cool. Like I can't even remember to like pull this out. So like here's the thing. Like, can we take it off now?

B: So you're just showing up to class with just pieces of paper.

W: Yeah. And this is still the fifth grade, you know right? Like not even a kid, you're sixth grade, looking for your field trip form. And then during the pandemic, we're all sitting at home and I had a decent amount of time on my hands, so I was like, hey, why don't I talk to a psychiatrist

and just ask the question, "Hey, do you think I might have ADHD?" And the psychiatrist is like, "Well, yeah, from what you've told me here and the experiences that you've had, you very well could likely have it. How is it affecting you? Is it debilitating? Is it something that you would like to try medication for?"

And I did try something then that definitely did change how my brain

worked. And it was a non-stimulant. It helped me realize that a lot of what goes into my head is

disordered executive function. A lot of people think of ADHD as attention deficit, hyperactivity, right? That sort of idea, but a lot of it goes back to the idea that your brain does not

prioritize what you should be doing now or next the same way that everyone else’s does. And not everyone else too, right? We all have slightly different ways and you can train yourself to pay attention to different things too. I don't want to diminish myself too much, right? I have been successful at school. I've not needed medication for any of this, and yet still,I've definitely had a different experience than a lot of people.That's how I connect with brains and bodies. Yeah.

B: Thanks for sharing all of that. This is one of the reasons why I was excited to interview you.

I have lots of folks in my life who self-identify with ADHD, some folks who have diagnoses,

many of my clients have ADHD, and I don't know that I've ever met somebody who

has such an uncomplicated relationship with it.

W: Yes, I have a very uncomplicated, yeah. I just know that my brain works a little differently. I've been fortunate to have enough support in my life where that's never been a problem.

B: Exactly. And one thing that always stood out in the time that I've known you is even in

the moments where your executive functioning is maybe causing you some stress

or causing other people's stress, you are also so aware of its strengths and its beauties,

like those things in your conscious brain are at the forefront, which I think is so cool and something that I'm hoping will rub off on some of the people listening.

My next question is in line with our title of North Stars and the symbolism of that and the podcast, Who or what have been important guides, inspiration, or support for you in your life?

W: I really like aphorisms and short stories and I definitely pull a lot of experience or guidance from those. There was a certain point in my life where I think it was in my early twenties, maybe my late teens like going off to college where I was reading a story online and in the story it was talking about a principal and a parent that were having a conversation together about this person's daughter and they're talking and the daughter had been struggling in class and the daughter's not always paying attention and things like that. And in the story, the principal's like, "Hey, you know, can I talk to you in the hallway just for a minute? I want to have a private moment." The girl is like, please, you know, "make yourself at home, just hang out, do whatever you want." Right. And she says that's great. And so they go off into the hallway. And when they're in the hallway, the principal says…Oh, and I forgot the one final detail – which kind of comes back to all of it —is he turned the radio on when he left. So he walks out and he says, "I just want you to watch her for a second." In the story she doesn't think she's being watched and she's just sitting in the chair and the principal and her parent watch this girl just get up and start to move and start to dance. Clearly her mood lifts and everything. And you know, now she's feeling very free and he's like, “There's nothing wrong with her. She's just a dancer.”

I really liked that at the time because again, growing up, I'd always been told, do not study with music. There were definitely rules that I had in my house and everything, but I've found that if I study with music, oftentimes I can help use the audio as recall.

B: What is the best part of having ADHD?

W: When I was in grade school, I never had homework because I was like, yo, no one is telling me that I can't do my schoolwork in class. I'm just going to do my homework right after the lesson while it's all fresh in my brain, you know, because I can listen, I can interact,

I can participate. I've got these different feeds happening.

It also helped me with my job for a long time. My job quite literally was like helping direct technology plays– demos and whatnot. And oftentimes there would be a lot of different,

like there's an audio and video feed over here. there's that person over there, so once I could get into a rhythm and figure out how to harness my focus and attention, then it really felt like a superpower. Like I was able to go do it and go be a bit more forceful or do it with that right presence in a way that was really impactful that would set me apart from other people.

B: That's really cool. That's something that I hear a lot from my clients and people I know, that

“It's hard for me to stay focused on one thing. My brain will sort of shift focus without my control” and hearing that that is something that you have harnessed and used and can use intentionally.

And having heard about your career, those are really complex, fast paced dynamic environments that you were in. And it sounded like you were perfectly suited for that in a way that might be hard for a neurotypical brain.

W: Yeah. Yeah. I felt fortunate.

B: Cool. And what parts of ADHD have been less fun or challenging?

W: I know that one thing that has been really challenging for me is figuring out organization for myself that works for me. For a long time, I was a “piles everywhere” person. Like I was living with other adults in my late 20s, early thirties, and I would get blamed for messes because my room was messy and therefore they assumed that I was the one creating messes in common areas. And that like that hurt my feelings because that that was not, it wasn't me. And I actually went out of my way, I would purposefully not clean up my own room because I spent the limited time I had to clean on the public areas because I didn't want to impose.

But yeah, the bad sides for me are being forgetful. Sometimes I, even think I can keep something up in my brain, but if I don't go back to it every 15 seconds, it just drops straight out and then it is gone. Recently, even I had talked to a friend, told them I was going to check in with them in 15 minutes, and then six days later was like, oh my God, I completely forgot about them. I hope they don't feel like I let them down. So that is the, the positive and the negative of it.

Sometimes I can control the focus and keep it moving. And then oftentimes I cannot, and I thought I could have, so I've overcommitted or I've forgotten something or I was unnecessarily

disorganized. Yeah. So that's what I struggle with.

B: That's such a common thing I hear from folks with ADHD and one of those things,

whenever I'm wondering where I fall on the neurological spectrum. Someone can call me and I'll say, "Oh, I'm, I'm just washing this dish. Let me call you back in five minutes." And in the span of five minutes, I could have picked up and put down three other tasks and have completely forgotten that that phone ever rang. And to that person, that's really hard to believe and it's hard for them to not take that personally.

W: Right. Yup.

B: But it's literally just gone.

W: You're like “I swear. I'm so sorry.” You're like, “It is me and it's not like, it's not on purpose.

Like I'll own up to it. It did happen.”

B: It's just amazing how fast our brains can just move on to the next thing. So yeah, all very relatable.

B: So how would you say, apart from school, how else has ADHD showed up in your life in noticeable or impactful ways?

W: I know one way that it shows up that I struggle with is just in like the day to

day conversing with other people. I try to think about not overwhelming someone with information because I can very quickly and easily do that. You know, it literally just, you start somewhere. It's like, oh yeah, there was this thing, and then there was that guy over here and like actually it was 3:15. Right. Keeping things relevant can be a challenge for me. I've had to practice my storytelling quite a bit in order to make sure I'm not too long winded because that is one of my bigger fears, but sometimes I do… probably even right now... I mean… yeah… it's really… conversing can be tough.

B: Dear listener, Will has his face in his hands, he’s face-palming himself right now.

W: Yeah. Yeah. Cause I, I want to be relevant to everything. And sometimes it's even tough cause I also externally process.I recently had a friend tell me this andI didn't give enough credit to that and be like, yeah, sometimes I need to say things out loud. I literally can't think in my head sometimes even though I'd like to think I can.

B: That's something that I relate to a lot. I think I'm also an external processor and I wonder if you have had this experience: Very few people say it to me directly, but sometimes I get the sense from people that because I'm an external processor, people think that you're like whiny

or taking up too much space or you are disorganized, cognitively disorganized because all of the processing that happens behind closed doors and most people's brains that's messy, is happening out loud.

W: The taking up space. That was something I like had to work through for a while, is that it is okay to exist. And like sometimes you are in a space and you're not taking up space. You're there. I had to reframe that for myself. I know what you're saying though, I definitely relate to that like in the sense that I worry that I am a bit much sometimes. I know for a fact I'm a bit much sometimes. I know that people don't always tell me that. And that does show up in my relationships. I give people proactive permission sometimes to cut me off to, if I've interrupted you, I'm so sorry. Like sometimes I just can't help myself. If I've interrupted you just say, Hey, you interrupted me. Like I will not take it personally. I used to take that personally. But those are the things that I know that other people need to deal with me. So that way I'm not worried about like, Oh, I have all these 18 different rules I got to follow in my head. If I tell people, "Hey, I am this way. And because I'm this way, that means that you should do this thing if I am being like this." And that may not be comfortable to you, but then I can stop thinking about being a certain way.

B: I think that's really beautiful. This knowledge of yourself and knowing how people are going to interact with it and to just name it and give people permission. "Hey, if I do go on too long and I lose you, like it's okay for you to interrupt me or redirect me," because that is something that I also hear from people a lot is the having that stress in your head of, you know, what are other people thinking? Am I following the social rules? Is this person engaged? Am I boring them? And I hear you saying that that is one of the ways to get that out of your head is to just be upfront and proactive with people. Yeah. I've seen you do that in action. It's very effective.

W: I do it all the time. Yeah.

B: So on the external processing thread, do you find that because you process things externally, you don't have the chance to edit yourself and sometimes you say things and you have to put your foot in your mouth because that was just you working through an idea. You didn't actually want to use that word or stay with that thought. It was part of the iterative process.

W: Yeah. And my guess is that even, I mean, you've experienced this firsthand, which is probably why you bring it up. I mean, it's, yeah. I know that if I get overly excited about something, it is very difficult to filter myself. I know, like I, it took me years before I could actually keep a surprise, like for someone because I like, I would just be like dancing around. I'm like, Oh, I just like want to hint to them. Like, you know, I would get fixated on it. Kind of like when you're like, Oh, like, "Hey, listener, don't think of an elephant now." Right? Like now that's exactly what you're thinking about, right? Right. It's terrible, right? Yeah. So it's, yeah, definitely.

B: Not having a filter. Yeah.

W: Definitely had to put my foot in my mouth. I definitely struggled to be quiet. I like to fill the awkward space, just because it's there. Yeah. And I do like, it is really, some of my best moments have actually been from when I've taken a quiet moment on purpose and told the other person, I'm going to think about what I'm going to say.

B: What are some of the misunderstandings you think people might have about your lack of filter?

W: The biggest one that I think about is usually during, you know, what I've taken a course that called these crucial conversations, where it's, you know, potentially two opposing viewpoints, strong emotions or strong opinions about it. Those conversations are really, really hard for me because oftentimes you will find new information from the other person in those. Like, I think the misunderstanding is sometimes I, you know, like you need to clarify what's happening in those. And in that moment, in that conversation, I don't get an opportunity to go conference with myself and talk something out. So there is that, there is a bit of the, you know, that duality of like, how do I process and work through this, even though maybe I don't even want to let that other person know what I'm thinking, cause it's a negotiation, right? So like, I guess the misunderstanding is that like, like there's definitely times where like I can be put in a corner by accident. And then I'm, and then I will blurt something out. Like it's, you know, like unless the other person has set me up for success, then I might spike all this right into the ground by accident, even though I didn't want that.

B: So I'm hearing you say that one of the misunderstandings is thinking, is not really realizing that external processing is literally sometimes the only way we have to think.

W: Yeah. Or at least, or at least the one that when I'm stressed, that I'm defaulting to.

B: Yeah. And that when you, that you like having, yeah, you can't like, it's just, it's not, um, it's not a discipline thing or an impulsivity thing. It's literally just how your brain works.

W: Yes. And that's one way I think a different misunderstanding is that I do, and when I don't know this for sure, I wonder how much people take my enthusiasm and wonder if it is genuine or if I'm like performing or playing something up. Cause I oftentimes can get pretty animated and that's partially just because like sometimes I get so excited that my whole brain is like loses everything, right? And it's just like, whoa, whoa, you know, and just like, yeah, like I want to go, you know, scream and shout. And sometimes it's just because it's like, that was really exciting to me in the moment. Like it might not even be that the idea of the long-term is very great, but like it, for me, it connected in a way because does this make sense? Like my excitement may not resemble, like it may not actually be about you.

B: Well, and that brings me back to something you had said earlier in our chat was that you can be a bit extra. And I wonder if that is something that has come up as a challenge or as a friction point.

W: I've been fortunate that it hasn't most of the time. Like I definitely, you know, at this point I feel like I've gotten a good control over like asking for space if I needed, especially if I've been with someone for a long time, like, you know, in a like many hours in a day sort of thing. I think I've been fortunate enough that my excitement and energy always comes across, oftentimes comes across as happiness, like exuberance, like it's never the hairier male emotions of rage or like intimidation or annoyance. So I've been fortunate that I think that I've, you know, like who I am in my personality has helped focus all of that away into more of like a, like, if anything, I think that people wouldn't take me seriously. Because I'm willing to go play in the silly space and, and have a ton of energy while doing it.

B: So it's something that I'm hearing that it's something that has definitely come to mind, but is it necessarily a huge stressor for you?

W: No, not a huge stressor. It just comes up every once in a while. Like that's definitely how I feel like embarrassment.

B: Yeah, it's interesting. I, I've definitely observed this with the kids I worked with when I ran a summer camp and just kind of in my personal life that I do think that for a certain subset of folks with ADHD, one of the beautiful pieces of it is the playfulness, the exuberance, the some, like you said, sometimes being extra happy, extra loud, extra moving, extra fast. And, and combined with the spontaneity, I think spontaneity is the either neutral or the positive way. And I think impulsivity is the negative way of framing that. That, yeah, I think that all of those things combine for some people to perceive somebody because they have all these traits as being childish or impulsive or immature, which I think is really unfair and says a lot about our society as to what it means to be an adult, what it means to be a professional. It really betrays our biases and sometimes like lack of joy and aliveness in our general culture. So I'm hearing that that has, something that's crossed your mind, but isn't something that has really weighed on you or really been.

W: Yeah, not, not a ton, but that's also, I think, you know, I've had a, you know, I've had more or less like one kind of job or role, you know, like I've had a bunch of professional relationships in one realm for a long time. So like, you know, now I'm currently unemployed. I'm starting to look for work. Like this could come up again, you know, it will, it will be on my mind. So it's, I definitely want to be seen as reliable and I know that because I'm all over the place, I can be seen as unreliable unless I really make a point of coming through on things. So I know, I know it will be something on my mind more in the future.

B: Yeah. As you enter new environments that are, for the listener, Will has worked for the same company for a long time. So it's.

W: Yeah. 12 years.

B: Yeah. Well, and I also wonder the ways that race and gender intersect with this, in terms of how people's behavior's are judged if you weren't white or you weren't a man,

W: And in the tech industry of all places, right.

B: Yeah

W: Yeah, I definitely benefited from those.

B: If that behavior that maybe your coworkers saw is just like fun and lively might be perceived differently in somebody else.

W: Yeah, no, I mean, I think you're spot on. You know, yeah, I was on an all white team for many, many years.

B: So one of the reasons I was excited to interview you is that you have so many tactics that you deploy every day to just do the things that you need to do. It to me has always impressed me how well you understand how your brain works and how you just work with yourself. And I'm curious to hear like you describe to us what are some of the tips, tricks, tools, habits that you do.

W: OK, so one of the biggest ones that I employ all the time is I don't know who does it or who wrote it, but like the getting things done method.

B: Bonnie holds up David Allen's Getting Things Done book.

W: Oh, David Allen, I should remember that.

B: Because it's one of my favorite books of all time.

W: My brain lets me go through a lot of different information, you know, rapidly. I love to skim things. I am terrible at sitting down and really reading things. So I prefer many passes versus one, you know, like one consistent pass on something. It took me a long time to realize that I just need to start something and do part of it. And then I can walk away, like do something for five minutes, like write down what your next step is, like walk away, you know, come back to that. Like, did you do that last step right? Do you like it? Do you want to do it again? You know, and just like iteration does help.

Or I guess the other part that I think about is I take what serves me and I throw away anything that doesn't. And I tell people this all the time. I think that's about horoscopes. Horoscopes are totally right when it serves you. And they're totally wrong if they don't. So why not just take the right part, you know? But so for like the getting things done thing, like there are some things that come back to that in that one. Like if it's less than two minutes, you should do it. I forget that one all the time, but that one I've been trying to remind myself. The main point of that book is get things out of your head and onto a list. Period. Right. Keep your brain free.

B: Right.

W: Right. My brain is very good at moving attention around and coming up with new ideas and making new connections and things. My brain is terrible at remembering. So why would I? We have computers. We have, you know, I do the whole reminder on Siri thing all the time. I have list, I have probably 20 different lists so I can say like, hey, Siri, add this to my, I don't use, hey Siri, actually, but it's, you know, like hold the button and then it's, you know, add.

B: I saw your screen on your iPad light up behind you when you said, hey Siri.

W: Well, that one's brand new. That's like, I, that one's, you know, fresh from default. So I need to turn that one off. I didn't know that was listening to me. That's bad.

B: So you, yeah, you are, Will is Mr. List. I can vouch for this. You have note cards and stuff taped to the wall.

W: Yeah, put it into my environment so that way my environment supports me.

B: Yeah.

W: And I really believe that one, at least for me with ADHD, it's like, yo, if you're already not good at remembering things and like having things, you know, ordered properly for your executive function, then just, you know, make it dumb. I put my clothes next to the door if I need to. Like I look like if something needs to go somewhere, it goes next to the door. Like my home is,

B: Make it dumb

W: My home is a physical manifestation of my memory, right? Like there is the memory palace and then you have the physical palace, you know?

B: I love that.

W: Yeah.

B: Your home is a physical manifestation of your memory.

W: It is. It really is though. Yeah. Other things I've been trying to follow lately is not less is more. That's kind of an overplayed thing, but like, yeah, less is more, you know, at least for me, like I, I could probably tell you where anything in my house is off the top of my head because if it's not in that place, then it doesn't work. It's the whole Marie Kondo stuff. Like I'm not great at it, but I've, you know, it's something I iterate through.

What else, what else do I do? I tell people, I give people permission or I expressly ask for help. That's a really big one for me. That was really hard for me to do until my late twenties, actually. Really hard for me to ask for help in any way, shape or form, but just like framing things up. Like I've had, I've had certain people be like, "Hey, I hate to do this to you. I'm terrible at email. If you send me an email, can you just text me that I have an email?" People aren't thrilled about it, but like, you know, then they know, hey, if he wants my important email and I want that there, then that's what I need to do. And I've had people push back on me and say, actually, that's too much for me. I also have ADHD. This actually really happened to my friend where he's like, "Dude, I'm so sorry. I've catered to you for a while and I've got too much going on. I can't, you just need to look at the email." It's like, you know what? That's great. I'm willing to support you in your ADHD journey. Like cool, you know, making things easy, right? Like I, because of ADHD, like it does take, I get like the whole mental block in my head about a task so often. And so making the first step easy is super helpful. Even things like cooking. The thing I'm getting into lately is salads and Mason jars. Mason jars for everything. Actually, I've been using Mason jars for my coffee. I've been using Mason jars for salads. I use Mason jars to store my leftovers. Like one thing that can be applied many different ways is really helpful for me because then it's just a stock of those things. You know, I don't have to worry about like many, many different kinds of stuff.

B: I like this concept you said of making the first step easy. That is something that comes up all the time in coaching. I think this is the case for many humans, but is especially the case for folks with ADHD is that transitioning between tasks, starting something is so hard. The first step is the hardest.

W: Yup.

B: And I'm hearing you say that you intentionally think how there's this thing I need to do. I need to make dinner or I need to go out and buy something. How am I going to make that first step as simple as possible?

W: Correct. Easy example. I'm trying to run more. So when I think about it, I'm like, oh, I want to go for a run. Can I run right now? No? I want to run later today. I've got time for it later today. Great. Right now I have two minutes. I'm going to go grab my shoes, my socks, my clothes and put them next to the door. And then I'm going to keep walking past that door. I'm gonna go, oh yeah, I do want to go for a run. And then I'm like, no, I don't really want to go for the run. I'm like, what if I just put all the clothes on? Oh wow. I've got all my clothes on now.

B: Oh I haven't heard this, this is so good!

W: What if I just went outside and started running and then I'm outside and you're like, well now I'm outside and I'm running. I should probably finish the run. Right? Like, yeah, I trick myself into stuff all the time. It's ridiculous.

B: It's brilliant. No, it's brilliant.

W: It's ridiculous and it works. Yeah. I literally, I worked through this with my therapist to begin this month. It's been the right thing. It's like, why am I not exercising? Cause I talked myself out of it. Why not talk myself into it? The other day someone was like, oh, like go do this or like meet me here. And I'm like, you know what? I wanted to go for a bike ride. I was going to go in the Presidio, but instead I'm just going to go bike to where they are. What else can I do now that I'm going to bike to where they are? It's like, oh, I'm going to go fix that thing on my bike that I wanted to do. I wanted to get the quick release off. Oh, I need to go to a bookstore. Great. And then the other thing I know I had spent two and a half hours like combination of biking and seeing this person and taking care of these other three errands and they're all done now. So it's good. Yeah. It's yeah.

And like, and then the final one I think I've been struggling with is oftentimes, especially in the Bay Area, everyone's always about like, or at least in the tech industry and stuff, it's about like optimize your life, make things most efficient and effective. And that doesn't work for me because

B: 10x your productivitiy!

W: It just doesn't work for me because if I start to do stuff like that, then I stop doing stuff. And so like, I do think it's helpful to sit down and think about how I've been doing and like, okay, maybe there's a better way to doing things from time to time. But I know for me, like that, like I had got to keep the like production capability session to like 5% of my time. It's it's rare.

B: Interesting

W: Production just needs to be, just keep doing things like doing things isn't so hard if you just keep doing them.

B: Are you saying that that focusing on the how you're doing things and how you might be doing

them better is sort of dangerous and sort of sidetracking you?

W: Yes. Yes. It is seductive and I get into like an energy well where that I sit there for days instead of you know, instead of oh, turns out in those three days, I could have tried all of the different methods and just seen which one I liked the most and then not had to like think about any of it. I just experience it. So that that's kind of where I'm at and working on right now.

B: That makes a lot of sense. I think for perfectionists, for overachievers, and for people who struggle with focus, like you don't always, those folks don't always get put in the same bucket or have the same challenges. But I do think that the emphasis on productivity performance can really derail people. Yeah. It's like just do the thing.

W: Yep. Yep. Just go try it.

B: Yeah.

W: Live your life.

B: Those were some great tips and tricks. Thank you for sharing all of that, and I'm going to be chuckling about you tricking yourself into running for the rest of this week.

W: Yep. That's how my day works. Oh, look at me now.

B: I love that so much

W: Oh, wow. I did a three and a half mile run. I wasn't even sure I was going to do that. I just kept going. Yeah.

B: All right. Obviously, I could talk to you for two more hours, but I'll switch us to closing. Do you have any closing thoughts that you want to share as we wrap up? Anything else that you think would be helpful for people to know?

W: Well, no, I'd love to start off just by saying to any of your listeners, right? Thank you for listening. I oftentimes can be a little rambly, but I hope that you've found some sort of a nugget in here that is helpful, even if it's one tiny thing. Maybe it's one of those tips, maybe it's one of the stories. I hope something in here is helpful for you. Oh, okay. Here's my other final one. I don't know if anyone else with ADHD experiences this, but I find that whistling is really effective for me. Yeah, you laugh, but I'm actually not joking. It is very effective.

B: I'm smiling. I'm not laughing.

W: Yeah, you're right. Yeah, you're realizing all this.

B: Will is an incredible whistler.

W: I whistle all the time because it helps connect the environment around me with my brain directly. I don't know. Yeah, it's a way that, it soothes me. It's self-soothing. Yeah, I find a lot of pleasure in it, and it has helped me with my focus. I've been doing it most of my life. People know me because of my whistle. I hope that you find something as powerful as that has been for me.

B: That's really ...

W: [whistling] Yeah, that's what I hope for you. I hope you go find something as powerful that helps you control your own attention with the caveat being you can't whistle everywhere, so it's not always helpful.

B: Well, that is unfortunately all the time we have today, but Will, thank you so much for being here. It was truly, really fun to talk through all this with you, and thank you for all of the beautiful and practical ideas and tips that you shared. I hope that folks get a lot out of it.

W: You're welcome. I do too. This was fun.

B: That's it for now. I hope there was something in this episode that helps illuminate your path. In the meantime, we'd love to hear from you. To send us your thoughts, questions, or topic suggestions, you can go to my website, bonneprestridge.com, and message us through the general contact form. That web address is spelled B-O-N-N-I-E, P-R-E-S-T-R-I-D-G-E dot com. That's also where you can learn more about my coaching services, and you can follow me on Instagram @bonnie.prestridge. This podcast is co-created and produced by Sarah Williams. You can find her on Instagram @sarahmikaelaa. Links to all of the above contact info can also be found in our show notes. Follow or subscribe to the show wherever you get your podcasts, and if there's anyone you

know who could use a guiding light, we'd love it if you shared our show with them. Until next time, we're wishing you fair winds and following seas.

[music]

[Will whistling]