

Dusty Chipura: Oversharing, boundaries & hyperactive brains

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SPEAKERS

Dusty Chipura, Katy Weber



Katy Weber 00:00

So why don't you tell me? How, how long have you had ADHD? And what kind of led up to your diagnosis? What were some of the signs in your own life that led to you thinking you had ADHD and getting a diagnosis?



Dusty Chipura 00:15

Oh, well, the question of how long I've had ADHD is probably, yeah. Interesting, because I didn't get diagnosed until I was in my mid 20s. But the more I go back, and I think about my childhood, the more I'm like, yep, yep, yep. Yeah. And I'm like, how did nobody see this? I mean, I know how I know how nobody saw it. But like, it's so clear to me. And it's tough because I think, you know, if I had had that diagnosis in childhood, or I had people around me who, who kind of understood what that meant, I could have had a lot of a lot of different experiences. But I got diagnosed in my mid 20s. And I'm not I'm not sure. Like, I'm not sure that I remember what led up to it. I had a partner at the time. And so my brother was diagnosed with ADHD as a child and his son has ADHD. I think I was talking to my partner about how my, it's pretty was pretty clear that my dad also had ADHD. And he was like, yeah, and you have ADHD? And I was like, No, I don't. He's like, Yeah, you do. And I was



Katy Weber 01:15

like, No,



Dusty Chipura 01:16

are you are you? Are you serious? Like, yeah, but the whole thing is that, you know, it's, it's that classic story of like, I just thought I was really bad. I just thought I hadn't like very little self discipline, and that, like everybody else could form habits, and I couldn't do it, everybody else could, like, make progress on the things I wanted to make progress on. And I had to like, you know, I just thought that was like normal, or like switching, you know, sort of switching tasks. As often as I did, doing, taking on as many things as I did. I thought that was just the stuff of life and that everybody had to deal with that, you know,



Katy Weber 01:48

yeah, I feel like that I have that had very similar experience, which was like, I oscillate back and forth between feeling like, I'm the only person who is struggling to this degree. I'm the only person who seems to be able to know who seems to not be able to function in these certain situations, but at the same time, also feeling overwhelmingly like, doesn't everybody feel this way? Or doesn't everybody react this way? Yeah. I don't weirdly both at the same time, right. Yeah. Yeah. You know, I recently got my two best friends who I met in university, and are really the only two people in my life that I've kept in touch with. And since I've been diagnosed them and talking more openly about my ADHD, both of them are like, I'm pretty sure I have ADHD. And and I'm like, Yeah, you do, mostly because we're still friends. And, you know, the fact that we can stay friends together. When we, you know, our friendships often are like, we don't talk for a year. And then we pick up where we left off. I just recently, one of them had emailed me. And he was like, I think I have ADHD. And I wrote back and I was like, yeah, it's obvious. And then I spent like, the next week thinking like, what does that even mean to somebody who's wondering if they have at? What? For me, it was all the positive things that were about it. But I'm like, if you don't really understand what it is that could come across as being such an insult, and I just remembered, I haven't followed up with him yet. See how he felt about that. At the door? I've never, I've never said someone I think you have ADC and they don't have it. Right? Well, yeah, that's, that's been it's such a big thing in my life since my diagnosis, which is, you know, evaluating every single person, and realizing that every person I love, like every person I admire, like, I'm like, do they have it? Like, because sometimes I, you know, I have such a hard time distinguishing between what is ADHD? And what is just somebody who's quirky, bright, talented, you know, interesting. And I just sort of assume that anyone who has all of those things also must have ADHD.

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Dusty Chipura 03:47

Well, and it makes sense to you, right? Because, again, like what you said about people still being friends, like, you can only sort of keep people around if they're like, also kind of tend to flake out and like, are really disorganized and change plans at the last minute. And then you're like, Yeah, no, that's cool. And then you do it to them. They're like, no, that's fine, right? And then you have other friends who are like neuro, neuro typical, and you're like, Hey, I know we're supposed to hang out at five, but I just have to like, stop and do this thing. It's 4:55pm. So I think I'll make it to the cafe like maybe by 5:30. Do you want to come here and meet me instead? And those people be like, what? Like, and they won't put they'll be like, no, right? They don't get it right. Yeah, people with easy I find her like so much more flexible because they get it. Right. So I've definitely noticed that, you know, I don't think it's necessarily that it's like a weird coincidence. I definitely think it is like you guys do have a deeper understanding, you know, a similar way of being in the world, right?



Katy Weber 04:40

Yeah, absolutely. Okay, so you were in your mid 20s. So how was your experience with school like grade school or like University both? I feel like women go in opposite directions either. They were like really, really organized people pleasers or they just fell apart. Yeah. So

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Dusty Chipura 04:57

I had a really interesting experience because I Um, I was really smart in school like everyone's like, oh, were you a gifted kid? I don't know if I was a gifted kid because nobody was really paying that much attention. But I always got like straight A's, right? Like I never had. And I had sort of like areas where I did especially well, where I knew that I could like get a straight A's on like, 60% effort, right? It was anything to do with like spelling English writing, like I could nail it with my eyes closed. If I did really well, academically, but I had so many behavioral and social issues in school, which is interesting, because we hear this a lot more I think about boys. And, and I didn't have that sort of typical, like, Oh, she's like a daydreamer. She's just like, quiet or whatever. I was like, Oh, the one always being told to go sit back in my seat, like acting and appropriately, being hauled into the principal's office, getting suspended for like, weird, impulsive, you know, things that I did. But I also grew up in a really unusual situation where I was like, the only child of a gay couple in a small northern town. And so I was like, already ostracized from day one. And I just sort of chopped it all up to that, right. Like, my parents, were going through my, you know, biological parents are going through a divorce. And so I think most people, like most

adults in my life, just kind of wash their hands of me, because they were like, oh, there's that weird kid of that lesbian couple. They're all weird. And I hate them. Right. Like, I think, I think there was like a lot of prejudice. And so that probably contributed to people being more I think, being more willing to see me as like a weird person, because it was a very, very small community. So when I had a lot of behavioral difficulties, like nobody ever tried to figure out what was going on with them, or what was going on with me, they I just got in trouble. Right. So I, I had a tough time in in school, because I didn't have any friends. And because I was like getting bullied and acting out. But I was getting really good grades. And yeah, it's really weird that nobody thought that was weird, right. And I was like, one of those kids like getting straight A's, but like, doesn't, you know, is in the hallway every day. Let's talk to her about that. And then when I got to university, I was just completely like, like, nobody was monitoring me. None of nobody in my family has ever gotten a post secondary degree, maybe some of my cousins, I don't know. But nobody in my family has ever really achieved that. So I was just totally on my own when I went to university, and I didn't know how to do it. Because typical ADHD thing I didn't sort of like, take time to prepare and like read up and figure out like, what I was like, let's just jump in with both feet. So I just like registered for something started University, dropped out several times, got really good grades in the subjects I was interested in, right, got really good grades and subjects I was interested in. And then the ones that I wasn't interested in, I needed to get like extensions. And I had, you know, I was like writing the paper the night before. So I sort of hobbled my way through a four year degree in like five or six years, dropping out and changing majors several several times. And just sort of getting through it at my own pace. So I got through it. You know, I didn't burn out completely, but I definitely stopped on several occasions.



Katy Weber 08:07

Yeah, I had a similar experience. And just that I had two older brothers who did very well in school. You know, we're Scott both had scholarships, one of them went to MIT. And one of them went to McGill. And then I came along, my mom didn't know what to do with me. And so because I did, by the time I got into high school, I I even remember feeling like I had an undiagnosed learning disorder. But you know, I just sort of felt like I wasn't able to get the grades that I felt like I should and so I stopped going to college just cut class all the time. And and so my mom was always kind of, like would label me like she she would say like, you have street smarts, not book smarts, whatever that means. But she had it her way of kind of making sense of who I was in the world, compared to my two brothers, who would always say like, university is not for everybody. That's okay. And like, I think she was really trying to build up my confidence in a way of just saying, like, it's not, it's not for everybody. It's true, like you still have worth. Yeah, I remember, like, feeling so damaged by that label. And, you know, like, feeling like I really needed to go and do this and prove

myself over and over and over again. And yet at the same time feeling incapable of doing that. And now realizing, you know, like you said, like the signs were there all along. It's just been such a crazy whirlwind of looking back at all of the different ways in which have exhibited itself. What did you go to university for? I ended up going to McMaster for, like basic humanities, and then I dropped out and actually ended up in Whistler for a year. You know, because I decided I was like, I decided, you know, university wasn't for me, and then I lived in Whistler was like, yeah, there's actually an experience where I was working for the mountain and and I've never skied before in my life. The only reason I was there was because I literally ran out of money in BC and didn't know where to get a job. And it was like the beginning of species. And so I was sort of like, Alright, I'll work here. And it was just as non stop party town. And like I remember like going to get my incredibly overpriced groceries at the one grocery store in Whistler, and like, trudging home through the snow and seeing these like, Australian partiers or some tourists. Maybe they were American, but they were like bar day, and it was like a Wednesday. And I was just sort of, I had that moment of like, what am I doing with my life? Why am I here? This is not like, this is not what I want to do for the rest of my life. And I was like, I really should go back to university. And I actually tried to go to UBC, but they, they wouldn't take my grades were so terrible for my first year after I dropped out that they were like, Yeah, no, you would have to start all over again. And McMaster was the only they were willing to take me back. So I ended up going back to Ontario and finishing and getting like a poly psi degree. And actually, because I had gone back and was like, I'm determined to do this, I did really well, I ended up on the Dean's list. And I just was like, I'm really going to focus I'm really going to like apply myself. But I've sort of talked with other guests about that idea of like, when you when you do decide to do something, you have to focus on that one thing, like everything else has to fall away. So I had no friends, I had no social life. And just all I did was study just to prove that I could.

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Dusty Chipura 11:24

Yeah, that makes sense. I like I took anthropology and some of the classes were so the subject matter was so interesting to me. And if I was really interested in it, I could do well, but like they have these degree requirements. And so like as part of your degree requirement, you have to take like this kind of course in that kind, of course, you never know what it's going to be right. Like what it's going to actually be like until you take it. And anthropology is so weird, because it's a mixture of like a humanities, right, like so like socio, like social anthropology, cultural anthropology. And then it's like also a science, like there's like biological anthropology and archaeology, which is like a bunch of numbers and graphs. So I remember I took this one course that I thought was gonna be so interesting, it was about the history of like, ancient Japan or something. And like it was, there were some cool things like I learned about how rice came first came to Japan, like,

there used to be Japan without rice, right. And then it came down the Yangtze River and whatever. But like we It was a lot of like archaeological data. So there were like all these numbers about like, millions of years and like strata, and it was so dry, that when I go write a paper in one of these types of anthropology classes, I just, I just was like, locked up and couldn't do it until like the night before. And it occurs to me now that like I could, what I should have done is like, tried the class out and dropped it. That's why they have that date, right? But so many things that I did in my 20s I like didn't, I would I would like I was always putting together IKEA furniture without like reading the instruction, you know, jump into doing a thing without stopping to like, be like, how am I going to do this? What is the plan, I would just go go go. So if I signed up for a class, I'd be like, I'm not going to drop it that's like a failure or something like I'm going to finish this class, even if I hate it, which, you know, makes no sense. But I definitely feel like I was never reading the instructions of life.



Katy Weber 13:13

Yeah, I have that experience with recipes. Like I start step one of a recipe before I've even checked if I have all the ingredients. And so I'm like putting stuff in bowls and the oven is on and then I get you know, to step three and realize that I don't have any butter. And you know, and I'm like, there's been so many recipes that have been abandoned that way.



Dusty Chipura 13:33

So that's the that's the point at which I have like a total meltdown. Oh, I've learned to stop doing that. Because I get so frustrated. I'll start like throwing things I'll be like,



Katy Weber 13:42

Oh, I really wanted



Dusty Chipura 13:46

to like lose my mind because making cookies was the most important thing in the world at that moment.



Katy Weber 13:51

Yeah, I saw a post recently about like being an angry mom and having like Angry mom meltdowns and it's like, are you actually an angry mom? Or did you just get to like one

like, are you just, you know, have 12 things happen today and the 13th one was just the straw that broke the camel's back. And I was like, Yes, I relate to that so deeply. Okay, so how you were diagnosed in your 20s or kind of what was the road that led to becoming an ADHD coach?

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Dusty Chipura 14:31

It was a long and winding road with me, it stops. So I in my 20s, I was a musician. So after I finished my degree, I was like, whatever, don't need that anymore. I'm not going to use that. And I never had any trouble getting a job. I primarily worked in nonprofits and fundraising, because I'm very gregarious. So I was I was mostly focused on on playing music and trying to like make as a musician which is like, not really thing maybe it is for some people. It's not if you're playing the kind of sloppy punk rock that I was. Anyway, I spent a lot of time and money and my life force on just playing music. And I really kind of burnt I burned out on that, in like the truest sense of the word possible. Like I was on, I was on tour. I had had a fight with my drummer a couple months before in the parking lot of a bar in Las Vegas, and we almost came to blows. Like I almost got in a fight with this guy, we were almost throwing punches, for sure. And then my partner at the time, who was also the bass player got involved in the and he started yelling, and it was a big mess. He's really angry guy. So if he, if he lets loose on you, and he yells at you, you're probably going to quit the band. And that's essentially what happened with our drummer. I'm not with that person anymore. Primarily, you know, when I go to bed anyway. So we drove home from Las Vegas, or rather Los Angeles. And we were like, you know, really burned out. But then a month later, we're like, why don't we just get another drummer and keep going. So early January we are we're setting out on the road in this van which is just breaking down, it's just breaking down like every, like 1000 kilometers, it breaks down and we have to replace the fuel pump once it caught on fire, like literally caught on fire. And we had brought this guy with us who was a young fellow from our from our hometown of Vancouver. And I got really sick within the first week of being on the road in Reno, Nevada. And by the time we got to kata which is in Mexico, a couple days later, I was like I was like literally broke because I was mostly I was funding the band, I was out of money. I was so sick, I couldn't keep anything down. And it was like a Wednesday and we like had to play the show, because we needed the \$60 to get to the next town. And that's the point at which I was just like, I can't I can't do this anyway, this is my nightmare. Like there's this is my nightmare. I hate being on the road with all these people, right? My partner and I were really have a very, you know, tough relationship because neither of us were particularly emotionally healthy people. There were some other mental health things going on there. So it was really bad relationship. It was you know, we were out of money. I was just sick of doing it. So, again, we drove home from LA. And when we got back to Vancouver, I was just like, what am I going to do? Like, that's what I thought I wanted to do. I literally did it

until I couldn't do it anymore. And it didn't. You know, like in those movies, they say like, in the movies, right? If you try hard enough and you like really believe and you like live your dream and you like put everything you have into it, it has to work out right? Well I put everything I had into this band I put every, every single penny that I earned for like, almost 10 years went into this band, right? I didn't have money to buy presents for my family, like at Christmas time. And I really believed that it was gonna work out and it didn't. And so for about a year, I was just like, like dumbstruck, like I was like, well, that's what I thought I was gonna do. And it didn't work. So what do I do? So I was working, I was just, you know, working in a liquor store or whatever. And I kept thinking like, what am I going to do? Like, what am I going to do with my life. And I had dead either I didn't have a plan B because I was told like, that's how you achieve your dream, like don't have a plan B if you want to go all in, right? So I was racking my brain. And I was literally every week, it was like something new. I was like, maybe I'll be a lawyer. Maybe I'll be a real estate agent, maybe I'll work in senior care, right? I was trying to I was sort of trying to Venn diagram, like, what do I like to do? What does the world need? And what can I make money doing? And there was like, nothing like I just so um, so eventually what happened was, you know, I was trying to better manage my ADHD, you know, now that there wasn't this big like, because when I was playing an event, we were always picking up and leaving in a very unstable lifestyle. So I think for me, a lot of my ADHD symptoms weren't relevant, because I was literally like living out of a backpack for a lot of the time. And when I wasn't living out of a backpack, I could just hyper focus on trying to make this band work. So with that being gone, and having to do like everyday life, like pay the bills, and, you know, keep the house clean. I started noticing a lot more issues. So I started trying to manage my ADHD and I was working at this liquor store. And I had this one friend who lived nearby and he would come in, and he I knew he had ADHD, like he was diagnosed with ADHD. So he would be talking to me about his problems. And I'd be like, huh, yeah, I'm like, sounds like you're really emotionally dysregulated. Right, like, we just start kind of rapping about it. And then I started posting a lot online like, oh, like, here's what I'm learning about ADHD and like, because I have ADHD, this and this and that. And a lot of people started messaging me on facebook saying, like, wow, like your posts really helped me like, I think that I have ADHD or like, I know I have ADHD and like your posts really helped me. So at that time, I had a nephew who was about 10 or 11. And he started struggling and I wanted to hook him up with like an ADHD coach in his area, which was Calgary's I don't know how I found out about ADHD coaching at that point. I just liked him. Heard that ADHD coaches were thing. So I was looking for a coach for him. And that's when I discovered that there are very, very few ADHD coaches in Canada, or at least there were at this time, like, there was only two in the whole City of Calgary and there was like, only like one in Vancouver. And I was like, oh, maybe I could do that. And so I was at the time I was pregnant, I think I was pregnant at the time. And, and so I looked into going into coaching School, which you don't have to do, right, you don't have to go to school to be a coach, some coaches there have a very

strong feeling that it's not necessary to have, you know, sort of coach training or accreditation. For me, because I had done so many things so slapdash, I had done them wrong. I was like, No, like, if I'm going to do this, I got to do it, right. Like I want to do training and all that. And so. So I ended up putting, like, all the money from my maternity leave. And like most of the child tax benefit that I got the first year of my daughter's life towards paying to go to this, like coach school so I could get the training. And I really kind of brought in everything that I you know, ironically, like all the fundraising, and I had done right, putting myself out there, sort of, which is sales and marketing, right. So all the fundraising, and then all the social media know how that we had cultivated from being in a band together so that I was able to launch my coaching business and sort of know how to get clients. And



Katy Weber 21:22

that was that that is fascinating. And then you're like it, you're like, yeah, like you said, it's this long and winding road that everything seems to make sense. I think about that a lot with like, I was a journalist, you know, and the only reason I was a journalist was because I joined the university newspaper and loved it. And it was the only thing I ever felt like, it was the first time I ever felt good at something. And, you know, so I ended up working in newspapers until I had my first daughter. And then suddenly, I was like, I was terrible at my job because I had a baby. And I had to go back to work after 12 weeks, because I was living in New York. And oh, and so I was like, I had to go back to work at 12 weeks, I was terrified. So for the first time in my life, I was terrible at this job that I loved. And I was also terrible at parenting. Like it was just like I had this total meltdown. And figured it was postpartum depression and and so by the time we were ready to have another baby, four years later, I was like weak, I cannot be working full time. Like we cannot be living in a city where you it is required for me to work full time, because I just fell apart. And so we left the city, we moved out like two hours outside of New York and in the boonies so that I could be a stay at home mom, but that was also incredibly miserable. Not having a job and being a full time mom is also it doesn't make it didn't make me feel like any better of a mom, I realized that that had, you know, that overwhelming feeling of failure and motherhood had nothing to do with whether I was going to work or not. I don't remember why was I talking about journalism? Oh, I think it was, Oh, no, I know, it was because I went. I know, right? Well, and yeah, and now I think about like, starting this podcast, was, you know, really, it's, it's brought out so much of my journalist past because when I left journalism and became a stay at home mom, I ended up going into health coaching. But what you were talking about with the blog, I think, is something of another reason why so many of us who have or why ADHD has become such good coaches, I think it has to do with that like impulsive oversharing that we tend to to know just like, it doesn't occur to me to hold back. You know, it doesn't occur to me to not talk very openly about all of my

struggles. And so like, for me, I was like I talk very openly about binge eating or body image or feminism or misogyny or like anything, you know, anything I'm just like ranting about today, I will rant about and then people are like, Wow, you're so brave for talking about that stuff. It's really helping me and I'm like, Oh, am I brave, or am I just stupid? I don't I'll never have the answer to that.



Dusty Chipura 23:59

That should be like, that should be the like, adhc motto. Am I brave? Or am I brilliant? Or am I just following through and a half cup dimple?



Katy Weber 24:09

It is a total mystery. Because I mean, there's so many times where I've opened my mouth about things and I've been completely You know, I'm like, I've made a terrible mistake by talking about this openly. Especially when it's like on Facebook. I stopped posting on Facebook because I'm just like, you know, Instagram I don't know, different social media I'm sure you feel this way with like all the different platform like different platforms are so the response you get is so different. Whereas Facebook, it's like I remember that like everybody on Facebook is like my my relatives and like people that I went to high school with like people that I don't want to know things about me generally. Yeah, yeah, exactly. Yeah, I



Dusty Chipura 24:47

found it was like a good place to kind of start just like sharing my experiences. But then now, that's the thing, right? Facebook is all people you know, and then all these other platforms are not



Katy Weber 24:58

Yeah, for me. Because right it's the real



Dusty Chipura 25:02

it's funny because I'm on tik tok. And so I'll have people from Facebook be like, Oh, I saw you on tik tok. You came up on my for you page. And I'm like, yeah. But it's funny because yeah, I was doing like a tick tock live the other day and this person came in the room that Tick tock, like, live or whatever. And I recognized her name. And she was like, dusty, is that

you? Do you remember me? And I was like, Yes, I'm doing a tick tock, live Talk to you later.



Katy Weber 25:27

Yeah, that's an interesting thing, too. I'm sure you deal with that, too, which is like people from your past, you kind of feel like they have access to you in a way that you don't feel like you're willing to give them. Yeah, I



Dusty Chipura 25:38

mean, I have a lot of people on Facebook come and be like, Hey, I think I have ADHD, like, Can you help me? And, and it's different. Because like it sometimes it's people that I really like, or that I know. And I'm like, Yes, let me help people right away. And then sometimes it's like people, I'm like, I don't even know who you are. Because, again, I was on the road for so long that I added all these people, I have all these people on Facebook, I don't know who they are, because I met them while I was touring. And a lot of that time I was like, you're literally in one different place every night, right? So when those people are like, Hey, I think I have ADHD, what should I do? It's not that I don't want to talk to them about it. I'm like, Okay, this is it. I'm like working. Let me get back to you. And then of course, I never get back to them. And I should really go through those messages because like, I do want to help support those people. It's just like, I'm so busy. I'm like, Look, man, watch my tiktoks and come back to me if you still question.



Katy Weber 26:30

Exactly. I feel like that. I mean, I get asked that too, sometimes where I'm like, every once a while, if the wind is blowing the right way, I will like drop everything and help a complete stranger on the internet and like, do as much as I can and sharing resources. And then there's another time where I'm like, Who the hell are you to be asking me to do all this free labor? Like get super



Dusty Chipura 26:50

person from like, my long ago passed? Like, hey, so like, my girlfriend has ADHD? And I just think that meds are like, really dangerous and addictive. And like, what do you like? I just don't know, what do you think? And I was like, I wanted to crack my knuckles there but already cracked. And so it didn't work. But for dramatic effect listeners, it's me buying heavily and then cracking my knuckles. But um, so that I was like, I was like, you're going to come here to my Facebook. Do you know me? You're going to come here with the men

shaming, okay, we're going to talk about this, but I tried to be I was like, you know what this person probably just like, doesn't know. You know, they're not trying to be horribly ablest. So I'm just gonna, I'm going to take a measured approach to this, but I was like, facepalm emoji.



Katy Weber 27:55

One thing I love about your Tick Tock videos, because that's how I discovered you. I'll be honest, I discovered you on my free page. Or I think I was like, when I first was diagnosed, I was, you know, I went I had heard tik tok was a great place for ADHD. So I had like, was following a bunch of hashtags, and started and you were one of the first people I started following, because I really love now in retrospect, how you walk that balance very well, of like, you know, you have a very positive energy. And you talk about ADHD in a very uplifting, positive way, but you're also not like ADHD is a superpower. Like, you know, there, there are some ADHD influencers, who like, kind of, I think, I feel like there's a word for it, where it's like, Doom porn or something, but it's like, you know, you'd like really like to talk about how ADHD is a struggle, and like, talk about how it this is a disorder. And we really need to like, talk about how hard Our lives are. And we need to advocate and I don't know why I'm saying that in a weird, sarcastic way, because I do appreciate that idea. That concept. I mean, I do feel like advocacy is a huge part of ADHD. And, and I don't relate at all to this concept of ADHD being the superpower. But I also am grateful for a lot of things in my life that I attribute to ADHD.



Dusty Chipura 29:11

Because you don't want to just feel like it's not like nothing's ever going to get better.



Katy Weber 29:15

Right, right. Yeah. And I think, yeah, there's a sense of, you know, there are ways in which you can use you know, use ADHD as an explanation for how you can better yourself versus like using it as an excuse.



Dusty Chipura 29:29

Or like, work with your ad. Yeah. Like, I don't even think it's like, there. It's interesting, because I'm like, what I try to think like, what is my ADHD superpower? Like, what are the ways in which ADHD has like, made my life better? And I'm like, I don't know. Like, it's hard to really say that it has without a lot of bitterness because like, when I think about it, like

I've lost a lot of friends, you know, and I've messed up a lot of things, but it cost me a lot of money. But what I can say is that it's absolutely possible to work with your ADHD to like, get wherever you're trying to go. Right? It might look a little different than what you thought it was gonna look like. But I think there's like a huge amount of relief in learning that like ADHD doesn't have to be an impediment. And, you know, it just it kind of becomes more like, this is something that there's this great ADT coach that I really love. His name is cam got. And he says something like, you know, like, when you start to manage the ADHD better than it like becomes like the background noise, right? Yeah. So it's, it's still it's always there. It's the background. It's the it's the setting, but it doesn't have to be like the main character of the play.



Katy Weber 30:30

Right? Oh, I like that analogy. The middle son. Yeah, you know, and it's funny because sometimes when I talk to when I start talking about motherhood, or even pregnancy, which I know is a topic that you get asked about and talk about a lot like I talk overwhelmingly about how it was a horrible experience, and oh my god, I struggled so much and postpartum depression, anxiety, like I talk about in such a negative way. And then I'm like, it really was, I mean, I love being a mom. And I'm always sort of worried about the fact that like, Am I scaring off ADHD women from motherhood in general, because I like to talk, I think we should talk openly about the struggle. And I think we should normalize how important it is to get help. But I also feel like, I don't want to scare women into thinking that they can't be adults. How do you manage that?



Dusty Chipura 31:21

And they're scared anyway. Like, I see this a lot in their one of two things right there, too. They're too scared to do it. Or they're like me, and they just jump they like, you know, didn't read the didn't stop to think about it just jumped into and then we're like, oh, god, what did I do? I think a lot of people in in the sort of the ADHD like Facebook groups, who are just saying, like, I would never have kids, because I can't take care of myself. And that sucks, man. Like, if you like, here's the thing, I people who like, intentionally, like childless by choice, or don't want to have children like cheers to those people, because one of the most environmentally damaging things you can do is like habit. Right? So I absolutely, like I really supportive of people who, who, especially women who are like, I don't want to have a kid, that's cool. But if you're like, I would want to have a child, I would love to be a parent, but I'm not going to because I don't think I could manage it. That breaks my heart. You know, I mean, that's where I really want people to know that, like, come on, man. You know, I mean, I can't describe anybody else's lived experience. Maybe it's true, right? Maybe for that person, it's true that they wouldn't be able to do it. But I think with like a

little bit of the right supports, and and, and mindset shifts, and, you know, again, getting to work with your ADHD and sort of switching up some of the expectations on yourself. Like, it's absolutely possible and who's to say that there's not a lot that a neuro diverse or ADHD parent can't contribute to their child's life, right? Like, one of the things that my friends tell me really consistently is that they're often really impressed with, like, how much stuff my three year old knows, because I'm always teaching her something, right? I'm always singing songs with her. I'm always like discovering things with her, you know, routine bed bedtime routine, whole different story, right? Do I sit her down at the table to eat a meal every day, I try to at least get one meal a day at the table. But there's some days where we're like eating french fries in the car, you know, that's the thing that happens. But, but I have my areas of strength too, right. And that's in sort of like that playful curiosity. So she's developing in in some different ways than maybe some of her toddler counterparts who don't have a neuro diverse parent. And so, you know, and like, we know, you know, we're only now really, I think learning a lot more about what contributes to, like, childhood learning that gets a healthy adult, right. Like, we used to think it was all these different things. And now we're learning like, you know, helicopter parenting is not that good for children, because children need space to, like, make mistakes and learn and grow. Right? And, you know, praise without context isn't necessarily like, the rules are always changing, right? parenting is even for people who are neurotypical. So, you know, the ways that a neuro diverse person parents may not necessarily be bad, just because they're different. Right?



Katy Weber 34:08

Yeah, that's a good point. I mean, even with even from one child to the next, you know, my first child, we always joke about like, she was our only child. So we would stare at her and be like, what can we do for you now? What can we you don't like this food, I will make you something else. What can I do to make you happy? And that's really kind of influenced her personality. And you know, the second child, you're basically like, you're going to eat what we're eating, bang, bang, bang, bang, smash, here you go. Yeah, and they're raised in much more of this, like, observant, neglected, you know, extension of the rest of the family and that becomes who they are, you know, and that forms their personality. Neither is better or worse, necessarily, in terms of like, what they what you know, like you said, It shapes who they are and what they're good at, but it's not like one is worth more or the other.



Dusty Chipura 34:54

Yeah, so I mean, you're even even like, there's like all ADHD parents or not Going apparent

that same just like all people with ADHD are not the same. So just when I when I see people, you know, feeling like they can't you know have a child because they get their life they can't get their life together sometimes I think it's the opposite, right? I'm like, we need urgency, we got to raise the stakes. Like if you're having trouble getting yourself out of bed and feeding yourself have a baby, you will absolutely get out of bed and feeders because you have to. Depending on you, you're going to shower. Oh, you're having trouble with showering? Let me give you a one year old, you will take any opportunity to shower.



Katy Weber 35:31

It's true. Don't do hygiene. Try



Dusty Chipura 35:33

having a baby you'll be constantly asking yourself when the EFF Can I get in the shower? Please God let me shower.



Katy Weber 37:44

Alright, so now I think you're actually my first musician. Definitely my first banjo player. What do you what do you love most about your ADHD?



Dusty Chipura 37:53

Um, I think. So I get I get this. And this doesn't happen for everyone. This is just like my flavor of ADHD. But I get I get this like hyperactive energy, where it feels like the world is so much fun. And fun is just like waiting around every corner. Like I just get so energized and excited about things sometimes. And it could be anything, right, I could like watch a music video or a TV show or like, I see a friend that I haven't seen in a while or like, I don't know, like maybe it's just a beautiful day outside, right? Like I'm easily influenced, like, I can be easily influenced to get into a bad mood, but I'm just as easily influenced to be in a good mood. And then I kind of get a little like dysregulated in the positive way. Like I get like, like joy dysregulation where I'm like too happy and too hyper. And so I feel like I have this endless capacity for fun and enjoyment. And that can that can backfire against me. Because if it's like a really nice day, or I'm really excited to do something fun, and I have to like attend to life duties. I'm



Katy Weber 38:58

like, uh,



Dusty Chipura 38:59

I don't want to, but when you know, when the stars align, and there's like a free day or there's free time and there's money in the bank, and there's like this excess of amount of like, energy inside me like I have the best dates and like as a person in my 30s. You know, I know so many people who just kind of like settled into this routine. It's almost like they've kind of accepted like, wow, life is drudgery. And I'm like, are you kidding man? Like every day is an adventure. So I think that like that hyperactive energetic pneus still really serves me and keeping me young, I guess. Right, which also helps with parenting a toddler. And so more than anything, I think it's just, I think it's just that like the need for fun. You know,



Katy Weber 39:40

I like that. I feel like I get very excitable about a lot of things too. And so often I will ask myself, you know, how much have I struggled like, Am I struggling? I don't know. Like, that's the question I often have about my ADHD where like, even about parenting where I'm like, Yeah, like whenever I see a mom who has a child under the age of, I think probably four or five is when I really sort of felt like I turned a corner. Like I want to give them a hug because I'm like, Oh my God, your life sucks right now and it's gonna get better because it did for me, but then I also sort of remember like, you know, the the video you posted about, like making everything into a song in order to remember. Like, it was so lovely if I like brought back all these memories about having my kids be this certain young age because now they're old enough that they're just so like over it and they're so sardonic. So like, I guess it is just such a pendulum of feeling like, you know, on the one hand really being like God, yeah, like, there's so much that sucks. And then not this. Immediately the flip of coin and just being like, and there's so much that's amazing about it. Yeah, you're like, both ways all the time. Right? Like why do we all think that we have bipolar? Maybe that's why



Dusty Chipura 40:55

someone said like someone said best. They're like, Oh, when your kid is sleeping, you just want to use want them to be awake and then when your kids wake up one of the Vesely



Katy Weber 41:02

Yeah, that's a great one. Alright, so now if you could rename ADHD to something else, less problematic acronym, what would you call it? Oh, I don't know. I



Dusty Chipura 41:15

see this one a lot. People are always like, what what I rename ADHD to and I used to be like, the thing is I I would be like, Okay, this is something I used to say don't judge me, but I and it was mostly about myself, I would say Oh, they call it attention deficit. hyperactive disorder, but they should call it asshole like deficit hyperactive disorder because I feel like I'm such an asshole. Like, I'm always forgetting people. You know, I'm like, totally bailing on people impulsively, like blurting out rude things like can't manage my time so um, like I used to say that it was like asshole disorder. But that's not very positive You know what? It's well like one of the things I often say is like we call it attention deficit disorder, but we actually don't have a deficit of attention we have an inability to like regulate our attention right so maybe I would just say I guess attention regulation disorder but our does sound very sir. Our attention regulation.



Katy Weber 42:19

gyroscope direct



Dusty Chipura 42:23

attention regulation. Great sphere. I don't know I think for better GE as soon as we hang up the call let's call it arm because that's primarily how I feel just



Katy Weber 42:35

right. Ir gh then you could throw hyperactivity at the end there. Yeah. All right. Yeah. Well think of sup day I like that. Yeah, it's a quiet I'm debating whether or not to continue asking that question. Because I feel like it's I'm very I'm always curious as to what the answers are. I have no idea what I would call it Don't ask me. But



Dusty Chipura 42:59

always try to rename it. I'm like, Come on, guys. We have enough trouble remembering things. And like, you know, it was people get confused, like, Oh, I have a DD but like, now,

how do I know if it's a DD or ADHD? Like just the whole change from even add to ADHD is like confusing for people?



Katy Weber 43:16

Well, and not only that, but I have yet to interview a woman. I mean, I think I've interviewed like, 60 people at this point, I women and I have yet to interview a woman who didn't have the hyperactivity element just in her thinking, you know, and so like, obviously, we don't relate to it. It when we think you know, so many of us, myself included, were like, yeah, I'm not hyperactive, I can easily spend days in bed, I'm not hyperactive. And then you start talking to them, and they're just like, Oh,



Dusty Chipura 43:43

I was diagnosed with like, etc, like combined ADT. And I think that's wrong. Because I could not spend days in bed even when I'm tired. I wish I sometimes I wish I could sit down for longer.



Katy Weber 43:53

I don't think I'm well, you're my age. I don't think I would literally spend hours on the couch or in bed. But I feel like I always felt like my default state is one of paralysis. And so it wasn't until my diagnosis that I realized, like how much time and energy I actually was spending doing things. And so that when I was relaxing, I didn't feel guilty about that anymore. That was like recharging. It wasn't paralysis anymore. And it really like helped me reframe that. And then I you know, so now I'm like, of course you're recharging you are you've been ups like running around since 6am doing all this stuff, like of course you're going to need a break at some point you're a human being, that's gonna be me at like 3pm right. But I for some reason felt so much guilt about that state of being that like my identity focused on like, that's who I am. I am a lazy person. So I think a lot of us end up feeling that way where it's like if we're if we don't have an ability to re to view ourselves as this multi layered, nuanced human being who does this and does this and has hyper focus and also needs to recharge then we're Just sort of like, I'm lazy, and I'm terrible, and that's our default. Anyway, yeah, I but I still feel like the hyperactivity part should stay in the description and in the DSM because I think it exists for everybody in a just interesting different ways. And I think it's, it's more important to just kind of talk about that element like rage. You know, hyper like, rage is a element of hyper activity that a lot of us don't talk about.



Dusty Chipura 45:28

I have a friend, a non binary friend who is really heavy on the inattentive type. And like, I used to work with me. And it was like, the first time that I'd like sort of seen like, maladaptive daydreaming or like, totally, like, spacing out, like, sometimes I was talking to this person, and I could see the gears turning really slowly. And I'm like, what, what is happening in that Hello, like, what's going on in there? And they're just like, their inner life is so rich, right? And they make these like, insane connections, right? Like you, you get them talking about the right thing. And they just like, pull all this and you're like, Whoa, you've really been thinking about this. And I'm like, so I definitely see that mental hyperactivity you know, in some of my friends who are inattentive type ADHD, as well as like, some of my clients for sure.



Katy Weber 46:12

Yeah, and I think a lot of the a lot of the advocates who end up making videos, I'm fascinated by like, the visual vignette element too, because I think it's so important in our, in our learning, I love tik tok, it fascinates me to know and I don't make videos for Tick tock, but I make videos in my head all day long. And I think you know, and there's like, I'll be reading an article here ideas I'll make, like, and there's those moments where I'm like, I just created an entire video in my head. I really wish I had the time or energy to actually edit it. It's the editing that becomes the hurdle.



Dusty Chipura 46:48

That's why I do more on YouTube though, because it's you know, I like Tick Tock is easy, but like YouTube is hard. Because it's so much longer you think or just or that or the editing, editing and like set like people accept on Tick Tock that you can like, look a mess, or it can be like not very well lit. Whereas like with YouTube, it has to be like, good quality, right? which required setup.



Katy Weber 47:10

Yeah, I guess so. I gave up on YouTube. I have to admit, like, I can't sit for a video longer than a minute or two anymore.



Dusty Chipura 47:18

Have you tried watching it on the on the enhanced speed though?



Katy Weber 47:23

Yeah, I mean, that's how I get cuz I have to like all my instructional videos. Like if I'm like, how do I figure out how to do this thing. I immediately have to go to YouTube to watch the video that's gonna show me how to do this thing. But I have to watch it on a fast speed. Yeah,



Dusty Chipura 47:37

I somehow didn't know you could do that. And my 75 year old undiagnosed father taught me that and I was like, the master has become the Grandmaster.



Katy Weber 47:48

That was an amazing development for me. Okay, so let's talk about the ADHD studio and your clients and kind of how people can get more of you how people can pay you how people can work with you. What are what are your offerings these days?



Dusty Chipura 48:03

Cool. Great question. So I so I coach people in a number of ways, I do one on one coaching as well as like small group coaching. But there there's a little bit of like a backlog for that there's a little bit of like a waitlist. So I always take new consultations, but I let people know like, if you want one on one coaching, you know, if you don't mind waiting, that's fine. But if you want to, you know work with someone sooner, I have a couple of colleagues that I really recommend to people for the one on one coaching. I mean, I think I'm a great coach definitely worth waiting for. But like I don't want to make people wait. So I'm happy to accommodate that. So I do there's a couple of other things that throughout the year, I tend to do like workshops and courses. So every year, once or twice, I offer a six week course called rock your ADHD, which is covers all the different basics aspects of ADHD and just sort of teaching people about what they are and some some ideas for managing them. It's not a lot of coaching, it's more just like learning. I do. I do these boot camps a couple times a year, which are like get your life organized. Like they're really intensive like two weekends one week like boot camps where it's essentially just like mega body doubling sessions. So we get on the zoom, we do like two eight hour sessions, the first weekend and other eight hour session and a four hour session that we can after. And throughout the week, we keep in touch about trying to get people's space and sort of like administrative messes organized. So that's another one. And then last year, I offered a nutritional coaching course in partnership with a nutritionist, and I'm thinking that I'm going to bring something like that back around again. So something more focused on

ADHD and food and feeding yourself this year. So there's always these classes that I offer, but right now I sort of just like put them out there when I'm ready and set them up through Eventbrite. So there's not really anywhere that people go to find out about that, but I am going to be redoing my website and putting up like a course offering for the year. So when the when the new website is launched, people will be able to see and register in advance for courses. So for most people The best option is going to be what you mentioned the ADHD studio. So that's a virtual space that I curate with another friend, and coach whose name is Christy powers, we run it together. And it's essentially like a monthly kind of subscription, where Christy and I will host like different body doubling sessions for people. So if you're not familiar with body doubling listeners, I'm just gonna address your listeners. It's like, you know, when someone hangs out with you, while you get something done, that's really it, right? If you find that you're able to fold laundry, when your mom comes over for coffee, or you know, your friend comes over to hang out and all of a sudden, you have the wherewithal to do the dishes or answer emails, that's all Bobby doubling is. So Christina, I run body doubling sessions, we do drop in coaching, we post accountability challenges, we connect people with each other, we, you know, we, we post content. And so that's a great space for people to kind of get some, like sort of ADHD toolbox skills, I call it so it's not like coaching, you're not getting that, like, the thing about coaching is it's really intensive one on one attention, right? Like when I'm your coach, I'm your partner. I'm your like cheerleader, like I'm there, through thick and thin with you. I'm not there to judge you. But I'm like very intimately involved with you. And we're like planning together and we're working on your life one on one, right? So with this, I'm not obviously as connected to people, but I'm, I'm available, right, I'm around and I can hang out and we can chit chat and you know, I can make suggestions, or you can just let me know how things are going with you. And it's kind of all about that community experience. Because at any given body doubling session or, or like office hour, like dropping coaching, you know, any number of people can drop in. And so what's starting to happen is that the same the same people are coming to the same things. They're starting to get to know each other, they're making friends each other right, so you got somebody in Norway, making friends with someone in Scotland and somebody in Australia and so there's also that community aspect which you do get on like Tick Tock and Twitter. But this is a little bit more a little bit more intimate. So you kind of getting to see and know the same people who might be struggling with what you're struggling with. So I think there's also one of the things that the studio offers is a greater capsule kind of like make friends with your like, make pen pals and friends with your like ADHD buds around the world. Oh, yeah. Yeah. And so that's like a description that people can can pay for like once a month kind



Katy Weber 52:12

of thing. I think those intentional communities are so enriching and important for us. All

right, well, anyway, I really appreciate I was so looking forward to this. So thank you. I'm a big admirer of your online portfolio, your work everything, all of it. So I love what you're putting out there into the world as a as an ADHD coach and just a badass woman. So thank you.