

Jerry:

Hey, Ian. Thanks for coming on the show. Um, it's just a delight to open up my screen and see, uh, see your smiling face. Um, we've gotten to know each other well over the years. Before we dive in, why don't you take a moment and just introduce yourself.

Ian Sanders:

Thanks, Jerry. It's good to be here. Yeah, I, I'm a creative consultant, storyteller, author, based, uh, just outside of London. I live here by the Thames Estuary, 40 miles to the east of, uh, town. And if I sit up on tiptoes, I can just see the, uh, I can just see the water. I love to see the, uh, container ships coming up the, coming up the coast here and, uh, uh, taking the dog for a walk down there. Um, so, most of my work, as you know, is with, um, global organizations and leaders inside global organizations helping people become better storytellers. Storytelling's a really key cornerstone of my work. So, just in the last few weeks, I've been working with, um, folks at, uh, Ericsson, the global telecommunication company, Amazon Web Services, Microsoft, you know, very familiar, familiar sounding names. So, storytelling is a big part of my work. The other part of my work is helping people with something quite simple, but also very essential, how to have a better day at work.

Ian Sanders:

So, that's another part of what I do. I do that one-to-one, where I can. In London, I do that in a walking, uh, a walk and talk thing I've designed. And, um, also do that globally. And I guess, uh, I guess my latest book is part of that piece as well, Jerry, as you know, *How To have a good day, How To Have More Good Days at Work*.

Jerry:

We'll, we'll dive into the book. Um, I'd like you to tell the story of how we met. And then, I'll correct you.

Ian Sanders:

(laughs).

Jerry:

No, just kidding. Because for me the story begins with a handwritten letter. Yeah. So, tell that story.

Ian Sanders:

The starting point, I think, started on Instagram in summer 2019, when I see a number of people in my network talking about this great book they've just read.

Jerry:

(laughs).

Ian Sanders:

With a very familiar cover, which is behind me on the, my favorite bookshelf. And, um, it's *Reboot*.

I keep seeing it show up. I thought, "Why do I keep seeing it show up and I haven't done anything about it?"

Jerry:

Mm-hmm.

Ian Sanders:

So I, so I rectify that and I buy the book. And that was October 2019. It's obviously been out for a while. I read it, uh, cover to cover in a couple of sessions, and was very touched by it. I read a lot of books. Um, I read a lot of nonfiction. There was something about this, something about your voice that touched me.

And touched me enough that I thought, rather than doing what I might do, which is reach out to a creator on Instagram or Twitter and just say hi. I felt moved to write you a letter.

Jerry:

Mm-hmm.

Ian Sanders:

So, I found, uh, the address of, uh, Reboot in, uh, Boulder, Colorado. And I, and I wrote a letter. And I included a little photograph or a postcard-

Jerry:

You did.

Ian Sanders:

... of a lake in, in Bavaria, Germany, which, um, an experience that had preceded me, my reading of your book, because that was when, that was in September. But there was something about you told a story about walking around lake.

And that was my story about walking around a lake. And, um, you very generous, um... Well, I was going to say generous kind of really your attention. That sounds a bit, doesn't sound very human, does it? So, let me rephrase it. (laughs)

Jerry:

Mm-hmm.

Ian Sanders:

What I loved was that I heard back from you. And that kick-started a, a relationship, um, that, um, that has endured, I'm pleased to say. And just a few months, I think, after that postcard, you happened to be in London.

And, uh, we had a lovely evening together, uh, where I hosted an evening of conversation about, uh, talking about *Reboot*.

Jerry:

Mm-hmm.

Ian Sanders:

So, yeah, feel free to correct me. That's (laughs) my version of the story.

Jerry:

No, that, that, that, that's how I recall it. And I was so moved by the handwriting aspect of it. And I was so moved by the story that you told. And you retell it in the introduction of your wonderful book, *365 Ways to Have a Good Day*. And you talk about, um, making a choice. And I'm really curious to, you know, to hear from you, about the choice that you made at that lake that day. Tell us about that.

Ian Sanders:

Yeah, well, we're faced with choices, aren't we, every day about how we react to situations and how we react to opportunities. And that particular Tuesday morning, in Germany, having just finished giving a presentation at a company away day and feeling, feeling kind of on fire, and I've done it, and it all went well, I was faced with a choice about how I spent some time. And it was just over an hour before my car would come to take me to, uh, to Munich to go to the airport. And, uh, you know, you know, it's like when you travel, you kind of been neglecting emails for a while, because you've been focused on the presentation. I thought I really better crank open the MacBook, see what I'm miss, see what I'm missing, and see what needs replying to. And then, I thought, I had known before I was gone to that venue that I knew there was a lake nearby.

Jerry:

Mm-hmm.

Ian Sanders:

Now, it was a very misty morning. And we were in the foothills of the Bavarian Alps. It's a lovely picturesque venue. Um, but I knew there wasn't far away down the hill there was a lake.

So, my choice that morning was, um, jump on the wifi or jump in the lake. And I chose the lake. And, uh, it was about a 10-minute walk away, maybe a bit longer. So, I had to skip down the hill, 'cause I knew I didn't have long. And the hotel receptionist, uh, gave me a key to a, the badeplatz, which is the bathing (laughing) platform, and a little key, and map, 'cause they needed to give you map. I, I nearly got I- In fact, I didn't find the gate at first. So, there's a metaphor for something.

(laughing) I couldn't find the gate. I have the key. And then I, and then I found this, uh, I found the gate, walked through, and was greeting with amazing, uh... It's funny, because I can see it over my, uh, right ear behind me in that photograph. I, I can see, uh, see this amazing crystal clear lake. And I, uh, I jumped in it, and I had an amazing swim. I was the only, the only person around for... There were no other human beings. And, uh, looking at the mountains and it was just amazing.

Ian Sanders:

And, you know, I realized that choice comes from a position of privilege, Jerry. We're not all going to have Bavarian lakes to jump into. But I guess my call to action is, you know, that we have choices.

And maybe we need to be courageous enough to make the choice that feels like this is the one that we should take. And on that particular morning, I don't know what, what about, well I do know (laughs) about it that was so powerful for me. And I tell you, uh... I don't know if I told you this bit before, but I had my phone with me. I took this photograph and how amazing it was, had the swim. And I then

telephoned Zoe, my wife, also the creative partner in my business, my best friend. And I phoned Zoe and said that I needed to tell her about this.

And I think she was a bit surprised, take my call, what, what it... I was like, "This is, this is something really special. I want you to remind me that, um, when, when, if things get tough in life." And I was in tears, tears of joy. And that was September 2019. Yeah, you know, the world, uh, has thrown some things at us since. So, feels pretty, um, pretty powerful for me.

Jerry:

Well, thank, thank you for sharing that story with, with others. And, um, hearing you tell that story takes me back to going into my office and opening this envelope. I think the stationery was kind of like, uh, brown paper kind of thing. That's the image that I'm holding in my mind. And I remember, uh, noting that it was handwriting, handwritten. And I'll confess that I always feel a bit of shame when I see that, when I see handwriting, handwritten things. Because, as a boy, I wasn't diagnosed with this until I was an adult. I have a form of, uh, dysgraphia, uh, literally where my handwriting is unreadable even to me, um, uh, which makes my journal entries quite secure. (laughs) It was at a time when I was receiving a lot of letters in response to the book. And many of them were handwritten. But this one in particular stuck, uh, struck me, because of the story that you told.

And I remember saying to myself, "I want to know this man, who would choose to jump in a lake." And I am deeply grateful that you reached out. Because, I'm deeply grateful that I got to know you and that I got to, um, develop a friendship with you, because of that small gesture. Um, and in my mind, I've often come back to the two little acts, writing a letter, and, um, jumping in the lake as a way of understanding, in some ways, who you are, who my friend Ian is. Um, and I'm curious, we actually haven't talked about, um, the book and sort of the impetus behind the book. But I think, if I remember correctly, and I'll connect this back to, to the story of how we met, if I remember some of the conversations that we had following actually meeting, and then of course soon after we met we were all in pandemic Zoom land, um, this book began as a series of journal entries. Is that right? Tell me more about that.

Ian Sanders:

Yes, Jerry, um, the, the book started as a series of journal entries going back 15 years. I think it was about 30 or so notepads. Um, I'm a great note taker, list maker, love writing things down in little, uh, notebook. Got one by my side here. And in the spring of 2020, in that first lockdown, um, I lost, I lost quite a few projects. Projects were canned, put on the back burner.

Jerry:

I remember.

Ian Sanders:

And I sudden, I suddenly had time on my hands. And I, and, and not far from where I'm sitting right now, in my workspace here in the attic, I had a box, in fact it's a red box, I can see it right now, a red box of notepads. And I decided to have a daily practice where one hour every morning I would go through them. It was lovely weather. We had, were treated (laughs) with, with, with good weather in the UK in that early lockdown. And, uh, sitting in that little, uh, garden house at the bottom of the garden, and I would go through them. And if I found anything that I thought was interesting, "Well, wow, I never

remember writing that, "I'd write it in, write it up into a doc, document. And by the end of the process, I had a 50,000 word Google Doc. And I thought, "Mm, I think I've got something here."

Jerry:

Mm-hmm. And I remember having some conversations during that time period. And I think it's going to be okay for me to note that, that was not an easy time for you. Is that right?

Ian Sanders:

Hmm. It wa- It, it was a time of mixed emotions, as I, as I think it was for many people. And on the one hand I had, I had this, I had this scenario where, you know, a lot of work got canceled. Um, but on the other hand, you know, we were gifted this time. I have two teenage sons. They were homes- being homeschooled for months and months as, as most people were globally. So, we had all this time together. Um, and I think I'm someone that, you know, needs to be focused on something and have some creative outputs. And whilst I didn't approach the journal exercise going through the old notepads as, oh, this is going to be a book, you know, I think, I think it was a good thing of keeping me... It was a good project for me.

Ian Sanders:

And I did a number of projects. I did some video conversation projects. You were kind enough to take part in *Meet the Storytellers*. And it didn't come from any great strategy. It came from have an opportunity to create some creative body of work that's not about revenue, that's just about being Ian. (laughs).

Ian Sanders:

So, so those were always good to do. But, yeah, no, let me be, let me be clear, it wa- it was, it was an unsettling time to have been building a business. And then, I had thought a lot of the work initially would be, you know, just go remote as it, as it did for a lot of my network. And the truth is that, that didn't happen. And, and the truth is that I had to rebuild a business.

Ian Sanders:

And I've done that many times before. I have a 21-year career of being a, a sole entrepreneur. So, I'd done that before. And a very good friend of mine, David, said that, um, and along with your, you know, uh, helpful advice, said, you know, "Remember what you're good at, Ian. And you're good at, good at pivoting. You're good at navigating without a, without a fixed plan. And, um, you know, that's what you need to bring to bear." So, you know, I was, I was fortunate. I have, had a few months that were tricky commercially for sure. But, um, uh, if I hadn't had that opportunity, Jerry, I, well I certainly wouldn't have written the book. And I think it was nice that the starting point, you know, was just writing up some notes rather than, "I'm gonna write another book."

Jerry:

So, there's a story I tell myself about how this book came to be, your book came to be. It could be complete projection on my part. And the story I tell myself is that you reached into that red box of old journals, because you were looking for some answers, because of the unsettling time. And the reason I want to bring that to your attention, I don't know if it has any resonance at all, but the reason I want to

bring your attention to that is that I think you did something really extraordinary with this book. Yeah, yeah, yeah, it's a fun book, as I, as I wrote to you once. You know, it's funny, and touching, and all of those things. But I think you did something really important and something that I always look for in, in artistic expressions was that you wrote something that you needed to read. Does that resonate?

Ian Sanders:

Totally. You know, in that period where, when we spoke, um, you know, I think I made a self-deprecating remark about a, you know, going through these, uh, old journals. And also, I went through some old photographs that, you know, at the same time was a, was an act of self-indulgence. And I always remember what you said to me, and it speaks to your great belief in concepts around radical self-inquiry, Jerry. Because, you know, I mean, you know, delving into my, to my past and going through some of the unearthing some of the stories of my life was incredibly important. And it was about reminding myself about who I am and what makes me tick.

Jerry:

Mm-hmm.

Ian Sanders:

There's another side to that which is kind of aligned, um, perhaps to what, what you're, what you're asking, which is that in spring 2020, we couldn't travel anywhere.

Jerry:

Yep.

Ian Sanders:

In the UK lockdown we could only go out once a day, and we abided by that. And, you know, I normally get incredibly energized by going on a journey. That is when, you know, I'm on fire, the pa- paper, pen and paper is going crazy. And, you know, don't do a lot of transatlantic travels, so normally kind of Pan-European travel. And what was lovely about finding all these notepads was that, at a time when I couldn't travel and do all the usual things I do for creative inspiration, my younger self had given me a lot of that. Because, in the pages of these notepads, little scribbles on a flight to Belfast, on a train ride to Paris, on a Eurostar to, um, Brussels, to, uh, uh, you know, sitting in my favorite, second favorite city of Amsterdam, and so it was wonderful to go through these thoughts and observations, and think, "Shit, that..." You know, it was the younger Ian giving older Ian what he needed.

Ian Sanders:

And who knew, who knew? Because, the only intentionality with these, with these books is about doing what I feel moved to do. I'm not thinking, "Oh, that might come in useful later." Otherwise, I'd have a really smart indexing system.

Jerry:

(laughs).

Ian Sanders:

But they go in the red box. So, it was, it was, as you can (laughs) note, with my emotion in the, in, in what I just said, it was kinda something really special there. I hadn't felt that with such emotion, as I did just now.

Jerry:

Hmm. I felt that support for yourself. I felt that, um, you know, there was a aspect in our conversations during that spring that I felt a little bit of your wondering soul being tethered to a spot of, you know, the guy who coaches people by just taking them on a walk, they guy who tells stories by, you know, by walking, who actually was told to sit still. And, um, I think that there's something very powerful. There was something very powerful going on at that time. And I'm moved by, by the notion that, um, something about reaching into the past, something about bringing forward young Ian helped present Ian, uh, to remind yourself that, uh, you, uh, you, you, you have traveled the world. You have, uh, agency and mobility in that regard, and that you've learned a thing or two along the way.

You know, I often talk, uh, with, with folks about, uh, journaling. People are fascinated by that fact that I have journaled so religiously, uh, since I was a child. And, and maybe now they'll be even more fascinated by the fact that I can't do what you did, which I actually go back in time and reread those entries. So, perhaps there's a little envy on my part. Um, but what I'll lift up is people will say, "Well, what's the point?" And for me, the point is oftentimes processing what had happened. And I think that you probably did something similar.

But, but, but I think in this book, in this experience, in this collection of things that I have learned, I mean, here's an alternate title, right, things Lian, Ian learned over the course of a few decades, or a decade and a half, right? And, and to be able to revisit those, I, I think of, um... I'm not going to remember full the quote, but I think of, uh, uh, Samuel Johnson who wrote, famously wrote *The Life of Boswell*. And there's a, there's a passage in there, which he's quoting Boswell about the power and the benefit of keeping a journal, which is the notion of being able to collect the little bits of wisdom over life, and to be able to revisit those. And that's what I think I saw you doing in this book, as a gift to others, but really first primarily and kind of a medicine for yourself. I don't know. Does any of that resonate with you?

Ian Sanders:

It was definitely medicine for myself. And you're familiar with this process where I had a body of work and then, uh, you know, uh, lovely publisher gets involved to make it into a, a book they'd like to market. And, you know, I had the raw materials. But of course, uh, it might be wonderful to me but no one wants to read a book of what Ian's, what Ian's learned.

Ian Sanders:

So, I, so, so, you know, the publisher's premise around 365 ways to have a good day was a, um, a framing of the book. And, and, thereby, I went and, uh, knocked on people's doors, including yourself, to ask other people about their advice, and thus had a curated sense set of 365 ideas. However, you know, in my initial Google Doc, if I go back to that, I had a working title called, um, um, *Follow, Follow You* was the working title for that body of work. Um, if I go back to that, you know, that, what's lovely is, you know, I

tend to write short form in these notepads so these little, you know, one page in moleskin notepad is probably equivalent to, um, half a page in the book.

Jerry:

Mm-hmm.

Ian Sanders:

And those chapters that are 150 words, you know, are pretty much, you know, the words that I'd written. And what I found... I, I suppose I don't write a journal in a traditional way, Jerry. The, the notes, lists, and, uh, um, and perhaps provide a similar amount of value. I love that quote you shared with me, and I think I hear that, and think, "Goodness, I'm so fortunate that I wrote these things down, and I can revisit them." Because, they've given me a normal, enormous strength and wisdom, and I was going to say power. Yeah, let's say it. They give me power. (laughs)

I'm so glad I went through them. But there's another thing which is more experiential which is, in those notebooks that I only thought I'd ever look at myself, never share with anyone else or would... I never thought, "Well, I'm writing this, and in 15 years time I'm gonna get my fifth book, you know, as an output of these." You know, I, I was naked. I was unbridled. I wasn't thinking about, um, I wasn't writing a piece for LinkedIn. (laughs).

Jerry:

Mm-hmm.

Ian Sanders:

I was a writing a piece just for me. And there was something about that, which, which I found that, when I went back on these notes, is I was writing how I felt how something made me feel. And that was the bit for me, where where I put some of those in the book, I don't know if the reader would notice, but for me, I'm painting a picture about something that happened. And because, I've written down how I felt at the time.

I think I tell the story of having, um, a, having a job offer, um, about six years ago, to go into, kind of go into the world of full employment again. And then, I have this moment where I'm sitting in Pizza Express restaurant, um, having just delivered a, delivered a talk to some, uh, some students, and having a sense of this is kind of my purpose, this is what I'm meant to be doing. And, because, I could go back and find the little note I'd written about it, you know, I'd written that note in Pizza Express Westfield, in Westfield Mall in Stratford East London. And I could go back and find those notes. And I think that kind of... When you're capturing an emotion while you're in it, and then you can go back and revisit it, it's not just a factual, this is what I did today.

Ian Sanders:

I'm sure with your journals it would be the same. I'm going back and I'm rediscovering, you know, the emotion I felt. That was a third dimension for me. Which, um, which sparked something in me.

Jerry:

Hmm. I just wrote down the phrase guide book to my own life. Um, and I think that, that's part of that journaling experience, isn't it? It's a, it's a... By, by, to reflect back what you were saying, by focusing on



the feeling, we solidify an understanding of who we are and who we might want to be. By noting what, what makes us sad or what makes us happy, what makes us feel full, fulfilled, or what completes us. We then, in effect, end up assembling perhaps even instructions for, for how to be ourselves.

Ian Sanders:

Yeah, I think the act of articulating my kind of philosophy in life, you know, words are powerful, aren't they? Capturing that and going, "Yeah, you know, this is, this is how I choose to live my life." And putting that down on paper, um, is so, is, is, is so important. And, you know, you said earlier this is per-perhaps book, you know, a book I wrote, a book I wrote for myself. And I think I did in that sense to kind of capture and your words, you know, my instructions for life, my user manual. I have two sons.

You know, I think, I think I wrote the words when I was talking about the lake story in the introduction, you know, I, I realized something that day in a, in a lake in Bavaria that, you know, we can live our life straight-jacketed by what we think we should do and be, or we can live a life true to who we really are, a life of, uh, authenticity and fulfillment. And that, and, and that kind of mantra along with another one I have, i-i-it's your life not a business model, um, is, you know, at the heart of, at the heart of who I am.

And, you know, what's exciting about writing a book, as you know, is that, and the book's been out in the UK, you know, a bit longer than the US, is, is getting these notes and, I haven't had any handwritten notes yet getting these emails and messages from readers, from strangers who have like, "This is me. I needed to hear this," you know.

So that, so that's always a lovely moment, as you know, so, you know, I, uh, the act of putting the, putting my work out there and my, uh, my philosophy on life, you know, um, uh, to have that hear back from people, the they needed to hear this, or this resonates with them, or, you know, opened their eyes, is, um, you know, is lovely. Because, I mean, at the end of the day, you know, whether I'm, uh, you know, running a workshop for leaders or writing a book, you know, I mean, I wanna, you know, I wanna touch people. I wanna spark change, you know. So, so, you know, I'm pleased that that has that kind of value.

Jerry:

I'm curious, um, pulling all this together, pulling these notes together, reaching out to additional friends for, for further insights and that sort of thing, how, if in any way, have you changed since when you began assembling all of this, and then when you received the hardbound final copy, what's changed for you?

Ian Sanders:

It's funny, because when you were starting the question, I kind of thought, I don't think anything's changed. It's just an output of who I am, but by the time you came to the end of the question and talked about the hardback book, the words that were coming to me, Jerry, was it's set in stone. And I'm not someone that likes rigidity.

Ian Sanders:

I'm someone who runs away from, uh, you know, too much rigor, and strategy, and, uh, begin shackled (laughs). Which is why, you know, my love of wandering around, and as you reminded me earlier. But I don't mind committing things to set in stone if they're sacred. And if they're like, shit, this fucking and at the heart of who I am. So, I hadn't realized till you just asked the question that, um, you know, the... I'm happy for this to be my legacy and set in stone.

Jerry:

Mm-hmm.

Ian Sanders:

And, and, you know, I'm fortunate that a publisher that said, "Oh yeah, let's publish this," um, because, you know, if it's, if it's that powerful to me, you know, um, I'm not a stone mason, so I can't go and chisel it in a piece of rock.

But I can have a book out that captures who I am. And people that don't know me can read it and get a sense of who I am as a byproduct of that. So, it's, um, so I guess, I guess that's maybe not a change. Maybe... I don't know. You tell me. I guess, that is more like a deepening of something I felt before, and a solid- solidification. And, um, you know, I had the foundation stones, didn't I? Now, I've got the, the, the, to rock or whatever it is that it's kind of something there as a... Talking about rocks and set in stone, I was going to say touchstone. I don't know if all these work together. (laughs) So, it's a, it's a touch, it's a touchstone. It's a touchstone.

Jerry:

Yeah. And, and as with most touchstones, there's something sacred about creating the thing that lasts. So, perhaps a change, transformation for you, hasn't been near as much as much as I'm hearing as an increasing awareness of there is something that you have set down and it becomes the thing that you leave for others, right? That's that word, legacy, that you used. I and I don't mean to suggest that you're done, but, you know, we're about the same age. We both have younger selves that have in one way or another communicated with our present self, right? I don't know if this is true for you, but it's certainly true for me. I am acutely aware of future self. I'm acutely aware, these days, of my impending elderhood, as I lovingly refer to it. Especially when I look in the mirror and I see the disappearing hair. It's no longer like, "Oh, it used to be black." It's like, "It used to be there."

There is something very, very sweet in the process for me of being able to set in stone that which I have come to know. You know, I'm working on a new book and it's different for me, because this book, the new book, is more around, what do I still need to know? What questions am I still working with? What is the process that's underway? But my first book was very much a like in that same spirit of imagining a descendant, if you will, either literally or figuratively. Reading this and saying, "Oh, this is knowledge that actually transcends the moment. This is wisdom" and passing it along. And that process feels quite sacred to me. That process feels like something...

I had dinner with a dear friend last night I hadn't seen in 30 years. I wonder why. And I said, uh, that this time period in my life feel very much like fruition, and less around path, less around wondering what will be and, and more around harvesting. I feel like I'm entering the autumn in that way. So, again, I don't mean to project that onto you. You're younger than me.

Ian Sanders:

I think the gray hair, by the way, is called distinguished, Jerry.

Jerry:

(laughs). Yeah, tell yourself whatever you want to tell yourself. (laughs).

Ian Sanders:

Yeah, stories we tell ourselves, yeah, yeah. I'm not far behind you. Interesting. I don't tend to think about the elder thing. But I think there's something important about unearthing and shining a light on, on the things that one is and one stands for, you know.

And I talk in the book of this concept of zooming in on what really matters, and thus, you know, that is what the book does. And it's powerful in that sense. And I think, you know, all those little things that are me. And, and it's funny, because, you know, I'd, you s-, you said at, you said at, the beginning when you'd, when you'd received the handwritten note from me, those two things said a lot about me, that I'd chosen the lake rather than a, a pile of emails, and I had written you a handwritten letter. And I smiled when I said that, because of course, you're right. And if you asked my friends, the people that know me well, they seem pretty signature Ian kind of things to do, right?

Jerry:

Hmm. Mm-hmm.

Ian Sanders:

Jump in the lake, not do the emails, and to, and to, and to be writing something, you know, by hand. Um, uh, so I think it's interesting that... I think it's interesting when one does those things just kind of naturally. And then, but, but they become powerful when, when they are seen and when they are seen in the way you're see, you saw them. I mean, I didn't, I didn't, I didn't write Jerry Calonna a letter because I thought, "Oh, maybe he's coming to London. I can host an event with him." I wrote you a letter because I felt I needed to reach out to you.

And it was wonderful, of course, that, you know, it had a happy ending. You wrote back, and, uh, we have this relationship. And I'm here, that's the reason I'm here now. However, if you hadn't, because you're a busy guy and you get a lot of letters from different people and emails, and you hadn't had time, you know, I wouldn't have felt sore, like, "Oh, I never heard back from Jerry." I think the act of writing and reaching out to you was something that I needed to do.

I don't know if you remember, but I, I, but I do, when we spoke in the, one of the lockdowns of 2020 and I told you about my pile of notepads and my desire to write a book, and that was before I had publisher interest, you said to me, because it's my fifth book, you said to me, "This time, Ian, I think you might want to write the book, you know, for you, that you feel you need to write, not a book that a publisher's telling you to write."

And that, in a way, well, that came true. Because, you know, when I, when I had the contract from the publisher I wasn't starting from scratch. Okay, it was a reframing that meant I had to do more work.

Jerry:

Mm-hmm.

Ian Sanders:

But I started with a body of work that was authentic, which had come out of 15 years of scribbling things down. (laughs).

Jerry:

Hmm. Mm-hmm. Yeah. I'm, I'm glad to see that my advice is consistent. Um, I hadn't remembered (laughs) that I told that.

The consistency of saying that reveals a belief system that I have, which I that, um, the things that matter, uh, matter on a personal basis. And, uh, you know, so often I feel like we run up against a, a little voice in our head that says, "Well, if I were to write a book that seeks to answer questions that I'm holding, somehow it's self-indulgent." Or if I was to write a book that was solace for me in a time of lockdown, that somehow that that's self-indulgent. And I think what, what gets lost is the realization that we are all interdependent, we are all interconnected.

I mean, I see this most acutely when I do a public talk, either on Zoom or something. And, uh, I almost always have Q&A section, and I almost always hang out a little bit longer than most people are used to with some question. Right? They'll ask a question, and I might ask them a question about why they're asking that question, right? And you can see them shift uncomfortably in that. And then, at some point, what u- what usually occurs is they say, "Well, I feel like I'm taking up too much time." And then, I have them look around the room and I say, "Look at the faces. Look at how drawn in they are. Are you actually taking up too much time? Or are you saying things, and feeling things, and asking questions that others in the room have?"

And so, when I think that when we, when we endeavor to create a piece of lasting art, um, the best art does that exact same thing. It bridges time, space, distance, and experience.

You know, one of the experiences I've had, uh, that has continued to surprise me is I wrote something that is deeply personal and has a memoir-like aspect to it. And the number of people who in writing to me say things, say variations on the theme, your story is my story. Now, when you look at the outer appearance of people, how could that be? How could your story be so different? You and I grew up in such different circumstances, and yet we didn't. Right? And in a similar fashion, I think that I'm not surprised that people are reacting to your book and saying, "That's exactly what I needed." To belabor the point, because you wrote something that you needed to read, you ended up writing something that others needed to read.

Ian Sanders:

Mm-hmm. There's a beauty in that, isn't there? Um, and there is something interesting human. I forget the phrase. I forget the saying. It's in the, in the particular lies the universal, you know. There's something in your story.

Ian Sanders:

And I was like, you know, I obviously latched hold of something, something, something in that. And there were a couple of lines that hit me about, uh, about your childhood, even though, you know, I grew up in a very different situation, and with not the same level of challenges that you described at all. However, you know, I felt that. And I suppose that's the wonderful thing about human stories.

Jerry:

Mm-hmm.

Ian Sanders:

And they affect how we feel, and thus we have an emotional engagement. I don't have an emotional reaction to every book I read. I had an emotional reaction to Jerry's book.

That's out of, you know, hundreds and thousands of others. And I guess you're echoing, um, perhaps what, what I feel, which is that, you know, the lovely thing is we haven't set out... I didn't sit down my publisher and say, "What's the strategy to prove, to, uh, create a book that, uh, the market's gonna love?"

Fuck that. I wrote a book that I wanted to write. And, yes, it was reframed around this 365 ways, which is a new series my publisher wanted to launch, and they wanted me to be the debut for that. Um, and I, and I do think when we do things and put things out there because we want to do them they strike home more. You know, my wonderful wife and creative partner, Zoe, uh, is a great sounding board for, uh, for posts I might want to put out on LinkedIn or media post over the years. And, uh, she won't mind me saying that she brings a good rigor and strategy to things. And sometimes, I, um, challenge her and say, "Look, I'm, I know what you're saying and you're probably right, but on, on this one, I'm just gonna go out and tell the story I wanna tell." And she might caution me and go, "Oh, it's a bit, it's a bit you, you, you, Ian. You know, it's like, where's the, where's the," she said, "where's the value for the reader?" And I'm like, "Eh, value for the reader, I just wanna... I'm excited about telling the story. And I'm just gonna hit publish." And when I do those, you know, those things where it hasn't been, uh, across Zoe's desk, and it might feel to me always a bit self-indulgent, it's often those pieces that tend to resonate, because there's something in them which is not too considered, not too structured. It's a brain dump of how I'm feeling. And there's something about being unfiltered, which, um, which, which, which resonates.

And obviously, you know, Zoe's right for, for when we're working with clients on storytelling projects. It needs all that rigor on who's the target audience, and blah, blah, blah, and all this. But, you know, when it's just there's something, something, um, uh, you know, a bit my, the, the DO Lecture I delivered, and, uh, so wonderful that you're, uh, the DO Lectures this year.

You know, the DO Lecture I delivered, did I, did I give it a lot of thought? Yes, I gave it a lot of thought. But it didn't come with an edited, here's the script. It was, it was what I was feeling and what I wanted to say. And there was a there was, um, a nakedness to that, and perhaps, um, in the communication, a, um... I-i-it was quite crude. It was quite crude. It wasn't polished. And I often think those things things are the things that, um, are the things that do resonate with others. And, um, I'm pleased they do.

Jerry:

I think that's, that's, that's correct. And I, I think what Zoe, in your instance, and perhaps your editor, publisher, my editor, publisher, the, the wisdom that they're sharing is, in those instances, is to remind us that there needs to be a lesson that gets extracted out of that story. There's a parable that, um, is powerful. And, um, uh, and I think one of the things I enjoy about, um, your books is, uh, you could argue it's 365 parables. Um, uh, the, you know, and each is, is, is, uh, moving in a particular way. And given what we were saying before about the legacy, I'm, I'm actually gonna bring us to actually the 365th parable, and I'm gonna read to you, because you've read to me from my own works. So, I'm gonna read to you from your work.

*365, Chisel Your Manifesto in Stone. "It was a Monday morning in October 2012, walking down Barcelona's," you're gonna have to pronounce this. "I stumbled across Café Cosmo. It was busy and buzzy. I instantly felt at home there. As I sat with my espresso, I got out my notepad, and without thinking started a list. I headed it, My Charter. And there and then quickly cranked out a list of 20 dos and don'ts. I will play where I play best. I will stay authentic to me and will not compromise. I will continue to be driven by curiosity, and will go out of my comfort zone to learn and develop, et cetera. I hadn't planned to write it. But I suddenly got the focus and clarity to, to articulate what mattered most in my working life. And it accidentally created a manifesto.*

*I think of a manifesto as a compass. It captures what you stand for, what makes you tick, what you will and won't do. It's like chiseling into stone your beliefs and your values. It stands there strong and immutable, a guide to remind you who you are and which will help you navigate your paths and choices in life. Write yours. Take half an hour in your favorite armchair or coffee shot to write down your beliefs and values, your dos and your don'ts. Stick your manifesto up the, on the wall, and live by it."*

My friend, I think you wrote a manifesto. It's called *365 Ways to Have a Good Day*. Because, I think it came from your heart. And it's far more than a list of 20 dos and don'ts. It, it's, it's legacy advice for someone else, for a descendant perhaps, or for the next fellow to come along and decide that maybe I will jump in the lake today.

Ian Sanders:

Thank you, Jerry. It's lovely to hear you read out the chapter that's, you know, so important, and kind of at the heart of the book. And I know it's crazy, because I wrote it, but I'd forgotten my use of chisel and stone, and we talked about chiseling and stone for the last 50 minutes.

Jerry:

I had a feeling you'd forgotten that. (laughs).

Ian Sanders:

I'd so forgotten it. Crazy, isn't it?

Jerry:

Yeah.

Ian Sanders:

I'd actually forgotten that choice of words. I'd forgotten, um, I've written it down here, I'd forgotten that, I didn't, you asked me earlier about harvesting. And I'd written it down here and I'd forgotten to, to respond on that. And, yes, I love that word. It's not a word that I use. But it will be now. I love that sense of harvesting. Isn't that a wonderful thought that I can sit back through all these experiences, and through notepads, and through the process of reflection, can be harvested? So, thank you for, thank you for shining a light on that word. It very much resonates.

Jerry:

Well, I think it's, it's our work to do is we harvest, um, and maybe can the fruit for winter. And we pass it along chiseled stone, and legacy, and books, and here is what I've learned from a life lived.

I think of those that had come before me, ancestors that I wish that they had done that for me. Um, and, you know, in some ways, they have in the belief systems that I have, that have defined my life. But I, but I do wish that I had paid attention, or asked questions, or prompted the discussions. And so, um, you know, the, the wisdom implicit in your 365th entry, I think, um, is really pow- quite powerful. And it's the way the oral tradition allows us to pass along knowledge and listen.

Ian Sanders:

Mm-hmm.

Jerry:

So, I, I wanna close by thanking you. I wanna thank you for jumping in the lake, I wanna thank you for writing me a letter. Yeah, I wanna thank you for reaching out. I wanna thank you for revealing yourself and I wanna thank you for chiseling in, all of this in stone.

Ian Sanders:

Well, thanks, Jerry that means a lot to me.