

URL: <https://ecorner.stanford.edu/clips/enjoy-the-journey/>

Cloudflare co-founder, president, and COO Michelle Zatlyn explains how she learned to enjoy the entrepreneurial journey by simply deciding to enjoy the journey. That turn toward mindfulness, she emphasizes, really did work, allowing her to ride above challenges, find learning opportunities in setbacks, and more fully appreciate her team.



Transcript

- I remember, I don't know if some people, 00:00:05,243 I went for coffee with someone named Chris, Chris Neil.. He's somebody in the Valley.. And, and remembering, I said, "My goal," and this is before we went public, "is to enjoy the journey more." Because I, like, I used to kind of get bogged down.. It's the thing about certain companies are highs and lows and 10 times a day early on.. Like, literally you go from "Oh my God, I just closed this person!" To "Oh my God, the company's not going to exist." Like it's like 10 times a day that these, this huge highs and lows that over time gets spread out as you become successful and you build a business, you build a team, and there's so many highs and many lows, which is much more spread out.. And so it was a couple of years ago, a couple of years after that dinner where I'm like, "Why does anyone do this?" It was a couple of years after that that I just realized.. And, again, I think it's back to kind of back to this mental health piece.. If you read a lot of the mindful mindfulness books, it's about, like, just finding the joy in the moment.. And I remember Jamie, my husband, was saying like, "Yeah, like, so when our kids are crying, "I'm gonna try to enjoy that more." And I kind of laughed.. I'm like, he's like, "But that's what it's about!" And so I kinda took that and I was like, "You know what, I'm gonna enjoy the journey more." And so it was, I think it was in 2018, so a couple of years before, a year and a half before we went public and I just said, "I'm gonna enjoy." And so when things are bad, when there's that lull at work, I'm gonna be like, "How could I learn from this?" And I really like, it was like a mental switch overnight that I'm like, "I'm just gonna enjoy the journey more." And that's been, I, it has been more enjoyable since I've said I'm gonna enjoy the highs and the lows..

And when we're in a low, I'm gonna be like, "What can I learn?" I'm grateful to be with a teammate who wants to solve this together.. We're gonna get out stronger it means if we're, if it's a low point, that means tomorrow's gonna be better.. Like all these sorts of things.. And so I did make a mental switch and I have enjoyed it more since I've done that.. - You have.. 00:01:46,930 So it's not just-- - Yeah! 00:01:48,268 - Okay, it's, it's real-- 00:01:55,050 "and everything's gonna be magically better." No, it's not, the problems get bigger, the expectations get higher.. And so you just, I just wish, you should just, I'm, I've gotten much more comfortable as I've enjoyed it more along the way...