

Mary Ellen: [00:07](#) From Managing Editor Magazine, this is Margins. If you have content in your job description, or you're just interested in how we all talk to each other online, we made this podcast for you, and this season on Margins, we're breaking down the creative process. I'm your host, Mary Ellen Slater.

Elena: [00:25](#) And I'm Elena Valentine. So, just the title of this episode gives me hives, and I'll tell you why, and I'm sure Mary Ellen is the same way, and- and for listeners out there, is that in order to... I hate even saying... I hate even to say competitive, but to kind of keep with the trends of marketing and technology, there's just this constant pool all of the time to learn new skills.

Elena: [00:57](#) I'll tell you one of the biggest stressors I've had recently was how to grow Skill Scout's video practice, and I hate to admit this, you know, but I know now that the video practice has outgrown my skills. And for the past year, the big stressor has been, "Well how do I take this video practice, and the team to the next level if my skills no longer match what this video practice needs?" And I'm talking everything from new equipment to, you know, server setups, to creative direction. It just becomes more and more overwhelming.

Mary Ellen: [01:37](#) Here's the thing. I think that, that is actually a pretty deep insight coming from someone who came into this work as a technical master, right, like based on your tech... and I did the same thing, right? So, I- I have a content marketing agency, and the core part of our brand is like... in our service areas, are based on my skillsets when I started it, which is editorial content, and B2B marketing, HR tech, financial services, and insurance. Those are also my areas of expertise coming in from... as a journalist, right?

Mary Ellen: [02:05](#) So, I- I... this is what I brought in here. Now, if I had only brought that in here, and nothing else, then... and I continued to stick by that, like we would be out of business. We would've been out of business by year three, and so, I think that's actually one of the dan... I've had to- I've had to work on acquiring new skills primarily around what it means to- to be sales, to do sales for business development.

Mary Ellen: [02:26](#) I've had to acquire a new set of skills around digital marketing, specifically. I've had to acquire a new set of skills around business management. You know, I don't have a business degree, and as this business grows, it definitely pushes my skills, right? And so, I guess, what I hear you saying is that this is the

technical... this business, as you all have grown, this has pushed you past your technical skills that you brought in.

Elena: [02:48](#)

It has.

Mary Ellen: [02:49](#)

How does that feel?

Elena: [02:50](#)

Well, now I feel relief because we're bringing someone one who can do just that, but for the longest time, the pressure was on me of how we grow it, and I felt like I could very well fail the team, because I'm trying to juggle not only that skill, but many other skills, you know, as you take a business to the next level. So, uh, it's been daunting for a really, really long time, and it wasn't until bringing someone on that we trust, who we know could grow the practice, have I been able to feel relief, which even this idea of delegation actually, and I'm- I'm curious about this when it comes to learning new skills, you know, this question of, "Is this a skill that I absolutely have to learn, or are these skills that I can delegate?"

Elena: [03:33](#)

So, that's been something, a skill that I've had to- to learn, and Abby my co-founder especially, around just the- the arch in science of delegation, and handing off pieces of the work where maybe it isn't necessary that we learn these skills, but it's about bringing really smart people in who have those skills already.

Mary Ellen: [03:52](#)

Delegation itself is a skill. (laughs). Right? Like, as you've learned, you have had to learn how to do this. I actually took... I've taken classes in learning how to do this. (laughs). I'm curious, like why do you think it's so hard for us to learn new skills? Like, what is it that makes it... especially as adults, why is this so difficult?

Elena: [04:09](#)

For me, I just look at time to effort ratio at this point. At some point, I just have to see that out of the limited amount of time that I have in my day to do the work that needs to be done for Skill Scout, is it the best use of three or four hours of my time to learn a new piece of software, or is my time better spent doing something else? That's, I think, the biggest thing for me when I think about whether or not it is important enough for me to take on this new skill.

Mary Ellen: [04:46](#)

Eric Dexter is the director of business development at Civil Solutions Consulting Group, and engineering firm based in Baton Rouge. Eric is really great at his job, but his approach to professional development can be a little unorthodox. For example, there was that time he took an acting class.

Eric Dexter: [05:03](#) First off, I have a friend of mine who, um, is an actress, and um, she, uh, as... you know, on the side, I guess if you wanna call it, when she's not, you know, working on certain projects, she had an- an acting studio called A Broken Leg Acting Studio here in Baton Rouge, and an actress by the name of Ashton Lee, and um, you know, she'd always say, "Man, you'd be great. You should do it, you should do it."

Eric Dexter: [05:24](#) And I had other friends of mine who had enrolled in the class, and they- they raved about what it did for them professionally, uh, and in particular, one of my good friends is a dentist, and you know, I was asking, "Why are you doing acting? Are you actually looking to pursue a career in acting? I mean, you're a dentist." He's like, "No, man." He's like, "Really, it's like, look, I'm a nerd. I'm an introverted guy, but I deal with people. Like, I deal with people. I'm literally in their faces all day, and I wanted to find a better way to connect with my clients." And so, he said, "What better way than to do that than to understand the emotions behind people, and what drives people by doing an acting class?"

Eric Dexter: [05:58](#) And so, even- even more than she, he sold me on why I need to do it, because here's this dentist wanting to do this, then me as just a- a marketer, and business developer, I should probably look into it. And so, I did, and you know, the biggest things about me was that I've always said that being in a sales role, it's... a lot of it is all an act, and what I mean by that, it's nothing nefarious behind it, it's just, you know, I've had days where I had to go...

Eric Dexter: [06:22](#) You know, early in my career, I- I sold insurance, and here I am selling longterm care insurance to teachers, and staff, and- and faculty, but, you know, just that morning, me and my girlfriend had a- a terrible fight, or I got a notice that I... one more, you know, one more late payment on my rent, and I'm getting evicted, or my car blew up on me, or my tire- tire blew up on the way to the appointment, and I'm sweating, and having to fix my car on the way to go sell them insurance, and what I would always have to do is psyche myself into not being that person who just experienced all those things, but being the person who is trying to provide a product, or service to them that was going to benefit them in the long run.

Eric Dexter: [07:00](#) And so, all of that stuff is so much of an act to me. You have to always be the same person, and tell those stories that are, uh, that are impactful like it's the very first time you've done it. And so, going through an acting class, I mean, you might do five, six,

seven, eight, nine takes, because they wanna get all the emotions out of you until you get it right, and it's the one that touches most with the viewer, or the listener. And so, there were various tactics that I learned, and I still learn today, uh, about body language, for instance.

Eric Dexter: [07:30](#) In our class, we had to do a monologue by the end of it, and I think we did six weeks, or so, six to eight weeks, and every day, on the very first class, you had to pick a monologue. They had a whole book of monologues that they recommended, and you just picked one, and you were gonna have to perform that every single... at the end every single class, you and your classmates, uh, in front of the industry expert who came to visit the class that day, and by the end of the class, they had a showcase where she brought in professionals from the industry, from actors to stuntmen, and women, to agents even who were looking to find talent, and you sat right in front of her, and had to deliver your three, four minute monologue, you know, looking at her, but right behind her are 15 people in a small, little room, you know, watching this performance, in a sense.

Mary Ellen: [08:15](#) What was your monologue?

Eric Dexter: [08:16](#) My monologue was from Saving Private Ryan. Um, it was from Private Ryan, Matt Damon's monologue that he did. Um, later on in the film, he was talking to Tom Hanks' character, and I forget what his- his character's name was, but Tom- Tom Hanks' character in the movie, and it's when they had, uh, the group had gone through some things, they lost some people.

Eric Dexter: [08:36](#) Tom Hanks was gonna tell, you know, Matt Damon about his wife's rose bushes, and Matt Damon goes into telling this story about the last night that he was with... all his brothers were together, and um, you know, he's talking about something that was just... one of his brothers was hooking up with this girl in a barn, and his other brothers were looking, and then, his brother that was hooking up with the girl caught him, and then, he got mad, and he chased his other brother. He threw something at him, and then, the barn caught on fire, and they were all laughing, and then, they ran out of there, and the girl didn't have any clothes on.

Eric Dexter: [09:04](#) And so, Matt Damon's telling this- this monologue, but the whole... you know, he's going through this monologue, and telling this story, but through the whole process he's telling this, as a viewer, you're realizing that as he's laughing about that memory, it's slowly hitting him that he'll never have that again,

because that's literally... You know, he ends it with saying, "Yeah. That was the last time me and my brothers were all together."

Eric Dexter: [09:24](#) Now, the key in what I learned in the- in the acting class just from the short time I was in there, and what I really look for now when I watch films- films, or TV shows, especially dramas, it was never about Matt Damon, and telling that story. The whole thing, and when you go back, and watch Saving Private Ryan, the whole thing was about Tom Hanks' reaction to it, because if you look at it, they'll show... a lot of the scene, it's Tom Hanks realizing as Matt Damon's realizing what he's now saying.

Eric Dexter: [09:52](#) And so, when Matt Damon finishes his whole story, and he goes... you know, he laughs, and kinda cries at the same time, he goes, you know, "Tell me about your wife and those rose bushes," Tom Hanks just kinda is like, "Yeah. Another time, or whatever," and he just kinda like looks off, and then, that was the end of it, but Tom Hanks, you- you learn is that... Tom Hanks is probably one of the best actors we have without saying a word.

Eric Dexter: [10:14](#) You'll have many scenes that he's in that they just show his face, and his reaction, and that can make or break a scene, and I've learned from the actors that came there, who will tell you it's a lot of it is about the person that's listening in a scene, and not the person speaking, and that was important to me, you know, and matter of fact, I go back, and I- I had a colleague of mine tell me the other day, or a peer of mine tell me how his boss, and I won't mention any names, but he says, uh, you know, "I'm presenting- presenting this policy to this group, and uh, I think it's a very important policy, but my boss the whole time, I think he has a resting skeptical face, and uh"-

Mary Ellen: [10:50](#) (laughs). That's not what we call that-

Eric Dexter: [10:52](#) (laughs). Yeah. I know. But it's- it's just a natural face that he has, I think, as he's thinking through what he's hearing, not that it's negative or positive, that's just his face, but he's talking, and giving his policy, and the whole time, he sees his boss out the corner of his eye with this face, and he's going, "Why are you looking at me that way?" You know, because everybody else he knows is in the room looking at that guy, and what his reaction is, is really telling them how they should feel, and I... Immediately, when I heard that, when he told me that story just like a week or so ago, I was thinking, "Wow. That's that- that's

that monologue thing I learned about. It's... A lot of times it could be just how our body language, and our reaction can sell even one of your colleagues' point they're trying to make."

Eric Dexter: [11:35](#) And so, that happens now, you know, we're in a- in a pitch meeting, or we're in a proposal meeting, we- we just presented on one that was pretty huge earlier this year, and although I was not the person speaking during the oral presentations, I played a role in helping us to present, and I would always tell our folks is that, "Even though you're not the person speaking, you're going to help sell this thing. Sit up straight, clap... now we can't clap, but nod, and smile when they make a point that they're driving home that we all know is important. You... yeah..."

Eric Dexter: [12:03](#) That, 'Ah, yeah,' but you have to do that with your eyes, and your body language, because if you're sitting there, and you're looking like you're bored, then they're probably gonna feel bored about it too, because if you're presenting to, you know, 10, or 11 individuals in a room, you're going to help sell that, because you're sitting directly behind the presenter, and they need to look at you, and go, 'Wow. Okay. I'm seeing them, they're industry experts, and they've probably heard this 15 times already, and they're still excited about that point that they're making.'"

Eric Dexter: [12:28](#) So, that's important. So, you know, long story short on... (laughs)... on the monologue, still to this day, I watch that scene, and I'm like telling my girlfriend, I'm like, "Watch this. Just look at Tom Hanks the whole time," and that is the brilliance of an actor is he didn't even have to say a word, you just looked at his face, and how his face became like, "Okay. I'm interested to hear the story," to going, "Oh, shit. Yeah. All your brothers just died, and I asked you to relive that story, you know, that moment, but thank you."

Mary Ellen: [13:01](#) And by the way, if you wanna check out Eric's monologue, the link is in the show notes. It's great. Our next guest is Jenny Ingham, our editorial director here at RepCap. Jenny actually came to us after working in academia for 15 years. She's got a PhD in English, and she used to be a college professor, so not only is she great at learning new skills, she's also an expert on helping others develop theirs. Not surprisingly, she had a lot to say on this topic starting with, "What does the word learning even mean?"

Jenny Ingham: [13:31](#) I mean, I think it's complicated what we mean when we say learning. Learning is a strange process in that it's something that happens incredibly easily and intuitively, right? Babies learn, we're learning from like the second we're born, and it's also something that can be really difficult, and challenging, and can require a lot of sort of intensive thought, and processes, and sort of intellectual engagement to make happen, and so, you know, I think learning is kind of an- an interesting category to think about, because it is- is both so simple, and easy, and also, you know, really complex, um, in terms of, you know, how we understand it.

Mary Ellen: [14:13](#) What are you... and I think, you know, I'm not a baby, right? You're not a baby, but we still have to keep learning new things. Like, do you think it's easier or harder to learn things as an adult than it is when we're kids?

Jenny Ingham: [14:21](#) I think it's different. I mean, you're right, like we're not babies, but I think there is something in our nature that is hardwired to facilitate learning, to encourage learning, and I think that, that thing that is hardwired in us, I don't think that ever goes away. I do think that we can kinda... as we age, and grow, and mature, I do think that we maybe stop listening to that, you know, kind of hard wiring so much. We practice it less on kind of a daily basis.

Jenny Ingham: [14:49](#) If you think about the difference between like, you know, an infant, or a toddler, who's literally learning to navigate everything in their world every second, and then, you think about adults who go through their day sometimes on just autopilot, right? Like, if you've ever had the experience of when you're driving home from work, and you- you have to put so little thought into that process that you don't know how you got home, right?

Jenny Ingham: [15:10](#) Um, so I think, you know, the experience of like the daily existence, and our relationship to learning changes so much over the course of your lifetime, it feels like learning becomes harder, but I do think that people kind of have that innate hard wiring, and- and desire to learn, that they can tap into.

Mary Ellen: [15:29](#) And thinking about your own career, right, like... so, when I met you, you were a professor, right? And then, now, you're a consultant, and you've had to spend the last year learning a lot of new skills. Like, how did that feel to go from being like someone who is very competent in a field that you had done for a really long time, and were really good at, to like now having to say, "Okay. I have to... I can apply these skills to some new

things, but there's also new things I have to learn." Did that feel weird? Was it fun? Like, how would you describe that?

Jenny Ingham: [15:58](#) I think it feels really fun, and also weird, and sometimes not great. Um, it feels a mix of things. I mean, one thing for me, and the reason that I wanted to stop being a teacher, and a professor is that in some ways, it had gotten a little too easy, especially the teaching side. I loved teaching, but once you've been teaching the same courses for 15 years, and you- you teach them multiple times a semester to multiple groups of students, and you teach it each semester, kind of year in, year out, it just like anything else, it becomes something that you can perfect as much as you sort of perfect any human processes, or- or actions, and you feel like there's not as much challenge there anymore.

Jenny Ingham: [16:38](#) Um, so I'm someone who really loves to learn, and was actively seeking like a whole new way to exist in the world, a whole new thing to do professionally with my life, and my skills that would be really challenging, that would require learning new stuff. I could've stayed a professor forever, you know? If you don't get fired, right, like I could've just kept doing that semester after semester, year in, and year out, and there are lots of amazing, you know, scholars, and academic professors who do find ways to stay in the profession, and still keep learning, and growing, and experimenting, and you know, trying new things, but for me, I felt like I had kind of reached the end of that process as much as possible, and I really wanted the challenge of doing something completely new.

Jenny Ingham: [17:15](#) And it's amazing doing something completely new, but it's also really difficult, like you said, you know, learning new skills, you know, after having had, you know, basically a career in one industry is always a challenge-

Mary Ellen: [17:29](#) So, how did you overcome those difficulties then, like what was like that? You know, in terms of thinking of yourself, you almost had to put yourself in the shoes of your old students, right? (laughs). Like, what-

Jenny Ingham: [17:37](#) Yeah-

Mary Ellen: [17:38](#) Can you... I guess, let me put it this way, can you think of a time, like thinking about this in the last year even, like whenever you knew you needed to learn something new that you didn't know how to do already, or apply your- your old skills, like... and sort

of freshen them up, and apply them in a new way, is there an instance like that, that sticks out in your mind?

Jenny Ingham: [17:54](#) Definitely. I mean, one thing that... one old skill of mine that has come in really handy in my new profession, and in sort of learning these new skills... um, and that's one thing that is wonderful about learning, which is that you- you're never starting from scratch, you- you do have other skills, and knowledge that you can build on. So, one that came in really handy for me is research skills. (laughs). You know, as an academic, especially one in humanities who's, you know, focused on, you know, writing, and communication, and those kinds of disciplines, research is sort of our bread and butter, right?

Jenny Ingham: [18:28](#) So, you know, I had finely honed research skills from years and years of being a professor, and a teacher, and a scholar. It's my natural sort of, um, inclination to take that research skill, and apply it whenever possible. So, you know, and when faced with like a new task, you know, how do you do this? How do we start offering webinars, or you know, what should be do to create, you know, a new, you know, podcast, or what should we do... you know, what's happening with digital marketing right now, or you know, how are we, you know, applying our skills in various ways? But my first instinct is always to start with research.

Jenny Ingham: [19:03](#) So, looking at what other people are doing, reading about what other people are doing, uh, you know, really just trying to gather as much information as possible.

Mary Ellen: [19:19](#) When Anthony Ranaudo was growing up in New Jersey, he idolized New York Yankees' shortstop Derek Jeter, but Anthony wasn't destined to become a shortstop. Instead, he became a pitcher, and that path took him to LSU, to three teams in Major League Baseball, and all the way across the world to Korea. An injury to his pitching hand has put Anthony's baseball career on pause for a bit, and he's taken this time to explore some other interests. He's a naturally curious, and driven person, so when we got together at the Managing Editor office for a chat, the conversation covered a lot of ground starting with how Derek Jeter inspired Anthony to pick up a baseball in the first place.

Anthony Ranaudo: [19:55](#) Uh, so, Jeter comes up, and- and my... I guess my parents just had an affinity, you know, kinda like really were attracted to the way that he carried himself, the way that he played, his emotions, and ever since then, I was attracted to baseball

strictly because of the leadership that Derek Jeter exuded, and the way they wanted me to carry myself. That led me to watching the Yankees more regularly, which they started winning the World Series, he won Rookie of the Year, and then, I started playing baseball shortly after that, and trying to emulate pretty much everything Derek Jeter did. (laughs).

Mary Ellen: [20:21](#) So- so, how does one learn to throw a baseball? Like, what's the- what's the fastest you ever threw a ball?

Anthony Ranaudo: [20:25](#) The fastest I've ever thrown, I think was 98 miles an hour-

Mary Ellen: [20:27](#) Jesus Christ-

Anthony Ranaudo: [20:28](#) And, yeah, that-

Mary Ellen: [20:30](#) (laughs)-

Anthony Ranaudo: [20:30](#) (laughing).

Mary Ellen: [20:30](#) So- so, how does a person go from being a four-year-old who looks up to Derek Jeter to throwing a baseball 98 miles... what... Where... How do you learn? Talk to me about like how you... when you... like, when- when did you go, like, "Okay. I can do this. Like, I'm gonna learn how to..." How do you learn to do that?

Anthony Ranaudo: [20:44](#) I think, um, if... looking back on it, I think I'm probably a little bit more woo-woo than some other people, because I- I firmly believe that it- it came from the belief in myself as a young- as a young person that my parents instilled in me. They kind of allowed me to say, "You're different. It's okay. You don't have to go the traditional route, and you can do this, you can play shortstop for the New York Yankees." So, everything in my, you know, waking life was taking... were taking steps to be the shortstop for the New York Yankees.

Anthony Ranaudo: [21:07](#) So, I would watch Derek Jeter, and visualize that of how he throw, and then, I would take that out to the yard, and I would throw with my dad, and of course, he would help me with certain things, and teach me how to physically lower my arm, but I think the visualization of watching Derek Jeter make plays, and then, running that back in my head, even at a young age, at five, six, seven-years-old, I would take that out to the yard, and play whiffle ball by myself, and almost emulate those type of movements, those movement patterns.

- Anthony Ranaudo: [21:28](#) Even the way he carried himself on the walk, and his at-bat, and different things, and I think that really played a role into my success on the field, and then, I mean, we're- we're talking about even as elementary as learning how to throw a baseball, but I think that really helped with my success going forward for sure.
- Mary Ellen: [21:41](#) Well, because all of those things, I guess, one of the things, when you describe that, I think about how you broke it into pieces. One, so, you had a mentor-
- Anthony Ranaudo: [21:47](#) Right-
- Mary Ellen: [21:47](#) You had a role model. Then, you started like breaking it down, like you knew what you wanted to be, and you sort of reverse engineered the things you were gonna have- have to learn how to do. So, like what do you... How do you reverse engineer up to like... So, you're like, "I'm gonna throw a baseball 98 miles an hour." (laughs).
- Anthony Ranaudo: [22:00](#) (laughing). Yeah.
- Mary Ellen: [22:02](#) Like... You know, like the reverse engineer from that, right? So, it's like, what are the things? Are there any sort of like key moments in that process where you were like, "Oh, shit, like I just figured this out."
- Anthony Ranaudo: [22:10](#) (laughs).
- Mary Ellen: [22:10](#) Like, I mean, do you remember... do any of those standout, like-
- Anthony Ranaudo: [22:12](#) I do. I think- I think at 10-years-old, I started separating myself from the pack in little league. I was bigger than everybody, I was hitting the ball harder, I was throwing it faster, and I was like, "Okay. This is really different now. Now, I'm seeing, and feeling..." Your parents are saying you're different than everybody, you can play shortstop for the New York Yankees, and then, you're going out on the field, and you're head and shoulders better than everybody. So, it's like, "Okay. This is really happening," and that was the first time I hit three home runs in my first...
- Anthony Ranaudo: [22:33](#) I remember this, when I was 10-years-old, you know, in my first little league all-star game when I was 10, and I was like, "This is different. This is different." And then, I think when I was 14, or 15, when I was a freshman in high school, I realized that I'm

bigger... I was 6'4", and I was bigger, stronger than everybody there, and I'm like, "Okay. Next level, I'm accomplishing things."

Anthony Ranaudo: [22:47](#) And I think, like you said, subconsciously having those mentors, of watching Derek Jeter all throughout this process as I'm getting better, he's still doing the Legend of New York, and still carrying himself as- as the high character individual. I was still striving to be that, so from a distance, I still had the mentorship, but I started realizing in having the success, and the real life experience, and feelings of, "Oh, my God. I can do this, and it's real for me. You know, it's a real practical outcome."

Mary Ellen: [23:09](#) So, but I've gotta say, one thing you keep saying... like, "Oh, I was bigger." It's like, like that was just gonna magically lead to that, that's obviously not true. There were some... there was training, there was practice-

Anthony Ranaudo: [23:17](#) Yeah-

Mary Ellen: [23:17](#) Like, what- what did your practice routines look like in... I mean, I almost wanna say even before you got to LSU, like as a high school kid, like what did that look like for you-

Anthony Ranaudo: [23:25](#) Yeah-

Mary Ellen: [23:26](#) Like a typical day?

Anthony Ranaudo: [23:26](#) I was always- I was always a harder worker. I- I think I... my... When I was young in our first house that we grew up, I watched my dad build an insurance company from the ground up with my mom, and so, he would go work all day, and then, he would come home, they would... we would make dinner, and then, he would take me downstairs, and make me sit on the floor, and play while he took more phone calls, and my mom was doing marketing stuff for him in the basement, you know, and they were grinding until nine- nine p.m.

Anthony Ranaudo: [23:46](#) So, I think I had that work ethic in me all- all the time, and my dad always say, you know, "If there's something that you want, you go and work for it." So, it was like, I was out in the front yard asking him to set up drills for me. He would never ask me to do things, so I would take the initiative to say, "Okay. I'm gonna go hit..." Even if my dad wasn't around, "I'm gonna go hit the ball, go run, and get it, and hit it back."

Anthony Ranaudo: [24:03](#) Like, I just found ways to train, and be around sports, and involve myself in that, and kind of like throw myself into that

fire, and- and just get the reps, and work that I needed, and felt that I needed, but at- at that age too, which is really crazy, because you hear a lot of kids nowadays too, don't enjoy it. I enjoyed it, that's what I wanted to do. I didn't wanna go play video games, I didn't wanna trade Pokemon cards, you know, like all my other friends were doing? So, I enjoyed it, and I think I found love of... in that, and I think that's what drove my success.

Mary Ellen: [24:28](#) Life as a competitive athlete is full of inflection points that challenge you and push you to your limits, so how do you respond to that adversity? According to Anthony, it takes a lot of humility and self-awareness. In fact, sometimes the first step in learning a new skill is recognizing that things are gonna be as easy as you originally thought.

Mary Ellen: [24:47](#) Well, I think one of the things that holds people back sometimes, I think, from jumping in, and learning these new things is like that horrible feeling of being incompetent, and suddenly like when you sort of level up, and like, I don't know, like talk to me about that, because I feel like where the points in your career, baseball or otherwise, frankly, where you had that feeling, and like, how did you push through it?

Anthony Ranaudo: [25:06](#) Yeah. I think it's disassociating yourself with maybe an image, or a perception of yourself that you think you need to be, if that makes sense. So, if you rely on either intelligence, or incompetence, and that's what boosts your self esteem, I think you're gonna have a hard time adjusting to things that are outside your expertise, because you... like I said, it takes humility to go to somebody, and say, "Teach me your ways. I'm not good enough to do this, I need to learn, you know?" And I think some people, and people think it's a weakness if you do that versus I think it's a strength if you have the humility to come to somebody, and say, "I'm not as good as you, please teach me your ways."

Anthony Ranaudo: [25:37](#) And it's the same way a kid would come to me to get pitching lessons, right, like because I'm an expert, you know? The same way I would ask a pitching coach when I'm playing, and I think I've always had that ability to be like, "Okay. I can be better. I can always learn. I... There's always something that I can grow with, and I think that mentality allowed me when I... whether it was in baseball, like I said... like you said, when I got to LSU, I remember being a 6'7" kid that never worked out, and I'm watching all these other athletes push weights, and do things that I had never done before, and I had to... that was a learning

curve for me. I- I was literally in the corner. They wouldn't let me workout with the team, because I was so goofy, and like uncoordinated, yeah-

Mary Ellen: [26:09](#) (laughs).

Anthony Ranaudo: [26:09](#) (laughing). I'm- I'm serious, I had to hold this stick. They were all doing weights, and I'm holding a body weight thing, and doing things in the corner-

Mary Ellen: [26:14](#) Oh, God, they made you use the stick?

Anthony Ranaudo: [26:14](#) Oh, yeah-

Mary Ellen: [26:15](#) (laughs)-

Anthony Ranaudo: [26:15](#) It was bad. It was bad.

Mary Ellen: [26:16](#) (laughs).

Anthony Ranaudo: [26:17](#) And I remember... and the strength coach was like 6'7", and he's like, "Son, we've got some work to do before..." But he's like-

Mary Ellen: [26:20](#) (laughs)-

Anthony Ranaudo: [26:20](#) But it was good, and at the time I could've cried... you know, and I actually remember calling my dad, and being like, "Dad, he's... they're embarrassing me, I'm sore in ways that I've never been, like I'm- I'm kind of a little bit of the joke..." Not the joke of the team, because they kind of knew that I was from New Jersey, and that I had a learning curve, and stuff like that.

Mary Ellen: [26:34](#) You were from New Jersey-

Anthony Ranaudo: [26:35](#) (laughs)-

Mary Ellen: [26:35](#) You were the joke of the team. (laughs).

Anthony Ranaudo: [26:37](#) (laughing). Stop it.

Mary Ellen: [26:38](#) (laughs).

Anthony Ranaudo: [26:38](#) They wanted to be like me.

Mary Ellen: [26:40](#) Right.

- Anthony Ranaudo: [26:40](#) (laughs).
- Mary Ellen: [26:40](#) (laughing).
- Anthony Ranaudo: [26:41](#) Um, and he- he could've, you know, said, "You're right, son. You know, like don't- don't worry about it, or whatever," but he told me, he was like, "This is part of it, this is what you wanted to go to LSU for, you wanted to challenge yourself to be around the best. You either adapt, or you don't," and so, that's what I figured out quickly is, "Okay. How can I go learn? Let's go, I'll go get extra reps." And that's, you know... And then, like you said, I started seeing the results really quickly, having that... that competence equals confidence, and I started, you know, having way more confidence.
- Anthony Ranaudo: [27:03](#) And I realized that, "Okay. Things can be learned. Even as... the things as difficult as motor skills, you know, at age 19-years-old, I'm learning new motor functions, you know?"
- Mary Ellen: [27:11](#) (laughs)-
- Anthony Ranaudo: [27:11](#) Like, "If I can do that, I can learn things, you know, on a computer, or marketing, or public speaking, or, you know, social skills... like, whatever it is," and that's where I was like, "Okay. It's gonna take some time," and if you have the big picture in mind versus, you know, immediate gratification, I think that helps, as well.
- Mary Ellen: [27:25](#) That's funny you were saying that, because I was thinking when you and I met, we were talking about your public speaking, and you're... kinda go this, like, "Well, I don't know," and I'm like sitting here thinking, "Bro, you have stood up in front of tens of thousands of people."
- Anthony Ranaudo: [27:35](#) (laughs).
- Mary Ellen: [27:37](#) (laughing). "And you're worried about some heckler like at the Rotary Club?" (laughs).
- Anthony Ranaudo: [27:41](#) It's funny, you... and when- when you change perspective like that, it really does put things in- in, you know, in perspective for you.
- Mary Ellen: [27:48](#) (laughs). I was like, "What are you saying? Like, this... like, you're like"-

Anthony Ranaudo: [27:49](#) Yeah. "Chill out, dude."

Mary Ellen: [27:50](#) Yeah. Like-

Anthony Ranaudo: [27:51](#) "You'll be fine."

Mary Ellen: [27:52](#) (laughs). Like, well, so, was there a moment like that when you went into the majors?

Anthony Ranaudo: [27:54](#) As far as success, or-

Mary Ellen: [27:55](#) As far as feeling that like, "Oh, shit," like... (laughs)... You're like, "Okay. LSU was like... that was definitely..." You were like, just like, "Okay. Here we go." Like... (laughs). What- what happened when you went pro?

Anthony Ranaudo: [28:06](#) Yeah. I think honestly, and I think this is... we talk about mental health for me, and when I say mental health, I had performance anxiety, and I think the first time that I noticed performance anxiety was my first outing in professional baseball. So, we went to spring training, I was the new signee, I was the first rounder, I signed for two-and-a-half million dollars, everybody's... and in minor league ball-

Mary Ellen: [28:22](#) Staring at you-

Anthony Ranaudo: [28:23](#) Exactly-

Mary Ellen: [28:23](#) They are staring at you. Oh, my God.

Anthony Ranaudo: [28:25](#) And that- that comes with a big label, expectations. There's 150 kids that are playing for nickels, and pennies, and I'm the money man over here, and I'm pitching. So, everybody surrounded me, and I walked... That was the first time that I actually felt my hand actually shake while I was throwing, and I was like, "This is a different type of adrenaline, and feeling, and expectation." And I think that was the first time that I noticed either performance anxiety, anxiety... like, things actually were different for me, and I think that's when I realized, "Oh- oh, shit, this is different than- than college ball, or anything else that you did."

Anthony Ranaudo: [28:53](#) And then, obviously, three or four years later when I was in Fenway when I made my debut, it was magnified even more against the New York Yankees, against Derek Jeter, my- my idol growing up, so-

Mary Ellen: [29:02](#) (laughs)-

Anthony Ranaudo: [29:03](#) Coming full circle there, yeah, when I- when I took my debut on Friday night at Fenway Park against the New York Yankees, and Derek Jeter was my second batter, that was definitely a realization moment for me where I was like, "Oh- oh- oh, shit. This is real. Here we go. This is it. Yeah. This is what you've been working for."

Mary Ellen: [29:14](#) (laughs).

Anthony Ranaudo: [29:15](#) But, yeah, absolutely, I think those were the- those were the two main moments in pro ball, and then, obviously afterwards, there was a couple other ones, you know, as you get traded, and you realize you're a piece to a puzzle, and it's just a business, and, yeah, there was definitely some-

Mary Ellen: [29:25](#) Yeah. It's like, "No, I'm a person, dammit."

Anthony Ranaudo: [29:27](#) Yeah.

Mary Ellen: [29:27](#) (laughs).

Anthony Ranaudo: [29:30](#) Yeah. (laughing). But I think it's good, because I think it really does help, because... I don't know, because you just... You know, in my world, everything was just so... everything was good, everything was good until- until I got traded. And so, sometimes as- as hard as it was, it was one of the best things for me to just learn the hard way, or to be thrown into that moment to realize, "Hey, look. This is more than just feelings, and emotions, like this is life."

Elena: [29:50](#) So, that's it for this episode of Margins by Managing Editor. Find us on iTunes, Stitcher, or wherever you listen to podcasts. Subscribe to hear more about our deep dive into the creative process, and if you like what you hear, share us with your friends, and rate us on your favorite podcast platform.

Mary Ellen: [30:05](#) If you'd like to hear more from the Managing Editor team, there's an easy way to do that too. We send out an email every Friday morning, and you can join the club at ManagingEditor.com/subscribe.

Elena: [30:17](#) Thanks to the team that helped make this episode happen, producer Rex New, and the fair-minded scientist himself, Marty McFadden.

This transcript was exported on Dec 16, 2019 - view latest version [here](#).

Mary Ellen: [30:24](#) We'll see you all next time.