Chris Martin - July 7 2021

**SPEAKERS**

Molly Joyce, Chris Martin

**Molly Joyce** 00:08

The first question is, what is resilience for you?

**Chris Martin** 00:11

I've thought a lot about resilience. And I've thought a lot about the difference between resilience and fortitude. And the idea that fortitude is a way you meet things, rather than a way you kind of respond or recover. And I think of resilience as a as a response. And I'm always incredibly grateful for whatever resilience I can find. And I love being surprised by having more of it than I thought I did. But I also am a little bit more focused on fortitude. Because I feel like that it's almost like the prow of a ship or something, like moving through the ice. And then resilience is like when, you know, the ship, like you actually ship starts to break, which it often does. And that's what I'm most worried about, when I'm like, whether it's like just going into a day, or going into something that's going to be bigger and knowing like, at some point, I could definitely break and then that's going to be scary. And so moving into it, sometimes I can get so scared about breaking that that I kind of bring on the breaking. So I think, yeah, I really love putting energy into the fortitude and then just allowing myself to be surprised by the resilience.

**Molly Joyce** 02:04

Next question is, what is isolation for you?

**Chris Martin** 02:16

I would say the moments that I actually feel most isolated, are when I am surrounded by others and and I think that the more I've learned about my sensory world, and my sensory needs, the more I've like, been able to understand these moments of like extreme alienation and isolation where there's, it might be a sound, it might be a kind of, like, combination of like, things happening that are like noisy or intense or emotional, or, you know, just all at once. And to me, it's intolerable. And like, I'm, I feel like I'm just being crushed, as if like deep underwater, like pressures, just like literally, and I've seen myself bending over. And like, actually, my whole body begins to kind of cave a little bit. And I can't look anyone in the eye, and no one else seems to be affected at all, and it feels so isolating to have everyone just kind of going on, and me feeling like oh my god, really no one, no one, like, you know, is sharing this like, terrible feeling. So I would say that's, for me, that's isolation.

**Molly Joyce** 03:56

And kind of opposite of that, what is connection for you?

**Chris Martin** 04:06

I've been thinking a lot about connection. Because I've been writing about trying to think through why, in my world, my world. I live at this intersection of autism or neurodivergence and poetry. And so I've been trying to think about why these things feel so wedded to each other in particular ways. And I think connection is a big part of it. And I think it's also what scares people about both of them. There is a way in which poetry it the kinds of connections that it seeks and promises and fosters aren't too That's, and they require some, some courage, some humility, some vulnerability. But the obviously the payoff, right, if you can really engage with it is huge. And we know that like, you know, you read one poem, and it could change your life, just a single poem. And I think that the neurodivergent people in my life, the autistic people in my life, and especially the non-speaking autistic people in my life, they, they really cut through all the bullshit, right away, and they want to talk about the real stuff. And it's so refreshing. And it for me, it's like, I can just like, it's not scary at all, to me, to me, it feels like just letting go of so much and be like, "Oh, God, so this is someone else," I can have a real, immediately a real conversation with about all the stuff and, and with all the intensity. And so those are I just like I treasure those kinds of connections so much. Both in poetry and with my neurodivergent autistic friends.

**Molly Joyce** 06:26

That's great. And last question is what is darkness for you?

**Chris Martin** 06:38

I think darkness to me is a, a necessity. Like stage, or moment, or movement toward light. And I think that is I noticed myself doing this often with my own palms is kind of diving into the darkness. Despite the fact that I am a deeply optimistic and loving and kind of believing person that there is this need to go there. And to be there in order to like recognize the light for what it is. And I yeah, I got into a conversation with another poet, who's a very kind of dark in the way that he relates, like, personally, like a very dark and, you know, he would probably argue with this, but like pessimistic kind of person. And we ended up having this conversation, that that was really it was really generative for the last book of poems that wrote and it was he was taking the position that that we're that we're living in heaven, right now. But that we, you know, so many of us are working hard to create a hell out of it. And that my argument was that we're living in hell. And that we're, you know, many of us are working really hard to create a heaven out of it. And I thought that that was really characteristic of my approach to darkness. The darkness is actually where we start. Like, that's, that's where things happen. That's where like, that's the generative points. My friend Hannah Emerson writes a lot about nothing. And nothing is this incredibly generative force is the place where the, you know, it's the place where things are born to a place where you find what you need to move forward. And so I feel like that's, yeah, to me, it's a really generative space.