



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

CTRL+CLICK CAST #070 - Emotional Intelligence in Design with Beth Dean

[Music]

Lea Alcantara: From [Bright Umbrella](#), this is CTRL+CLICK CAST! We inspect the web for you! Today Beth Dean returns to the show this time to talk about designing with emotional intelligence. I'm your host, Lea Alcantara, and I'm joined by my fab co-host:

Emily Lewis: Emily Lewis!

Lea Alcantara: Today's episode is sponsored by [Visual Chefs](#), a versatile web development agency with expertise in content management system and custom web application development. Through partnerships with designers, agencies and organizations, Visual Chefs propels the web forward. Visit visualchefs.com to learn more.

[Music ends]

Emily Lewis: Today we're really excited to have our friend, Beth Dean, back on the show. Beth is an illustrator and designer who works at Facebook on transparency, and she recently served as a White House Tech and Innovation Fellow. Welcome back to the show, Beth.

Beth Dean: Hi ladies.

Lea Alcantara: I'm so excited to have you back here. Can you tell our listeners a bit more about yourself?

Beth Dean: Yeah, so I've been at Facebook for about two years. I've worked mostly in Business Products. Right now I work on a team called Ads Transparency and Control, and that's how we tell people how their information is used for advertising and give them controls around their privacy.



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

Emily Lewis: Oh cool.

Beth Dean: But I also spend some time working on Facebook's authentic names issue, which I can get into a little more later. But yeah, before that I spent a long time working at larger companies like Progressive Insurance, American Greetings and Expedia and I worked at a bunch of startups too. So I've kind of seen a lot of different sizes and shapes of design problems and users so I feel like that gave me a pretty interesting perspective coming to Facebook.

Emily Lewis: And what is this White House Tech and Innovation Fellow? What was that?

Beth Dean: So that was through an organization called Lesbians Who Tech.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Beth Dean: And this was their second year doing it, and they invited a bunch of representatives from all over tech all over the country, so people who are product managers, engineers, designers, all coming to the White House to work on specific problems basis.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Beth Dean: So some people worked on social justice issues, like around using like crime and police data to solve things like police violence and also they just like open up government data. I work specifically on diversity and inclusion, and then I think that there was a live Google Hangout from the White House with all of the projects afterwards.

Emily Lewis: Wow, did you meet the President?



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

Beth Dean: I didn't. He was on vacation, which meant that a lot of the White House is under construction. They do all the repairs when he is gone.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Beth Dean: I was surprised to find that they had less security than Facebook's, so I wandered around a little bit and I found the bowling alley.

Emily Lewis: How exciting. I've heard about that.

Lea Alcantara: Wow!

Emily Lewis: Wasn't that Nixon who put that in, I think?

Beth Dean: It was either Nixon or... No, it was Eisenhower because it's called the Eisenhower Bowling Alley.

Emily Lewis: Oh.

Beth Dean: But they moved it. It was like in a state of disrepair and I think Reagan paid to have it moved to... I can't remember the name of the building, but the building was basically the work happens. It's attached to the White House, and it has again fallen into disrepair, and Obama tried to fix it and people were mad he was going to spend money on a bowling alley, so it remains as is.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Oh my goodness. I mean, it feels like you kind of gave us a little bit of a background in your professional life, but then more recently you're working on a lot of social issues and such. Is that sort of like bled into your actual everyday work, or was that always something that you've thought about and considered when you design or develop or do your job?



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

Beth Dean: That's a good question. You know I don't think it was something that I always considered, but I realized about a year ago that it was actually kind of this running theme in the background of my work that I maybe wasn't aware of until then.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Beth Dean: Like I realized a lot of the things I had found the most frustrating at previous jobs were when I felt like I couldn't do the right thing for the person using my product, and usually the right thing was something around ethics.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Beth Dean: Like an interesting thing about working in insurance is it's a product that's legally mandated by the government, so nobody wants to buy it. It's intangible, so it's not like a thing you can even hold in your hands, and you only use it when something goes very wrong.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Beth Dean: So people don't like it to begin with, and it's in an insurance companies' best interest to not be very transparent about how it works. One reason for that is they don't want customers to think about all the ways that they're getting charged for their rate, but also they don't want their competitors to know because reinsurance company rates it a little bit differently. They just use the parameters that the state defines within their regulations, so they kind of have like some boundaries and then they choose what they want from there. So it was really weird to work in a space where we were intentionally not transparent with customers.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Beth Dean: And so I've kind of had a moment about, yeah, a little over a year ago at Facebook where I started working on this issue of authentic identity and it really was like a lightning kind of moment where I realized this has been in the background of all of my work, like something that was really important to me was doing the right thing for people and also no one is necessarily going to let you do that, it's often an organizational challenge, like you have to help people understand what the right thing to do is and why they should do it.

Lea Alcantara: Interesting.

Emily Lewis: So today we're going to talk about something called emotional intelligence, and I think it relates very clearly to what you were just describing, but for our listeners, can you just describe what emotional intelligence is in general?

Beth Dean: Yeah, so I looked up like a handy dictionary definition so I could give you a more clean description in the way that I would talk about this, but it's essentially the capacity to be aware of control and express your emotions and how to handle interpersonal relationships with empathy, and I think the way that that relates to software design is just taking into account the feelings a person might be experiencing as they're using your application.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Beth Dean: These feelings could be triggered by the software itself or it could just be like the situation that they're in in their life at that moment.

Emily Lewis: And you mentioned how it can apply to software. Do you have thoughts at how it just applies to the broader experience of designing anything?



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

Beth Dean: Well, I guess you might not see it as much in graphic design. Maybe it depends on the space that you're designing for, like I can imagine this is something very important in the service design of a hospital, right?

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Beth Dean: Like I think there was a really great special, I can't remember whether it's Frontline, but years ago, there was like an hour-long TV special about idea of redesigning Kaiser's emergency room experience, and the people that are working there are under tremendous pressure, the people that are there are in one of the stressful moments of their lives, and then you just have a lot of people in this space all colliding with each other.

So I don't think emotional intelligence is necessarily new to design, but I think we're at a place with software design where we are finally really having to think about it. One of the things I've been talking about in some of the speaking engagements I've had this year is how we took a long time to get to a place where we even had good data to validate our design choices.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Beth Dean: For a long time, it was like we just need to build something well and they get to look good, and then something like Google Analytics came along, and then the other tools where we could actually measure the effectiveness of what we were doing. So we were really just thinking about, "Does this work? Does this work well? Does this look high quality?" And now software is integrated



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

into people's lives in a way it never was before and we actually have to think about just how are people existing?

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Beth Dean: They live their entire lives online now, and that means that they're using software in very emotionally vulnerable state sometimes, and that we have access to information when we're designing that we maybe never did before.

Lea Alcantara: I find it really interesting how you did mention like emotionally intelligent design or just emotional intelligence in the professional workplace isn't anything particular new, but I know for myself like when I was being taught design principles or even just web stuff, everything was about, "Let's make everyone as happy as possible in the baseline."

Beth Dean: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: And I feel like that was the extent of any consideration of people's emotional state, that everyone assumes that the baseline emotional state of the user is happy and that the next level, the only emotionally intelligent design decision is to make them happier or to surprise them.

Beth Dean: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: But emotionally intelligent design, I assume, goes beyond that. So can you tell our listeners a little bit more about what that means?

Beth Dean: Yeah. So to kind of summarize what you were talking about, one of the ways I think we have approached software design for a really long time is that we don't want to create friction for people, right?



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

Emily Lewis: Right.

Beth Dean: Friction is frustration. If they go through an experience and there is a lot of friction, they're not going to be happy, and that sort of assumes that they're coming into our designs in a good place to begin with, and people aren't always. So when you think about, "Why might I be checking my bank balance? Is it because I need to pay a bill and maybe there's not enough money in my bank account? Why am I logging into my insurance policy? Is it because I just had an accident?" I feel like maybe the best way for me to describe this is by examples of where it's not working. Is that okay with you, ladies?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Sounds good.

Beth Dean: So one anecdote I have for when I worked in insurance, so like I was saying, insurance rating is very complicated. People generally don't understand it. They don't know why their rate cost and what it does, so we were going to do a test where we wanted to show people their credit score as they went through the process of buying insurance because we thought this would help them understand how we assessed what kind of risk they presented to us, and this sounded kind of good on the surface.

We wanted to increase transparency and tell people a little bit more about how this was working, and when we got into the test, this woman was confronted with her score when she was not expecting it, and it was very low, and it turned out that she had been bankrupted a few years in the past by a huge medical catastrophe and it just devastated her family and they were living with the fall out of this for years, and she just was not expecting to be confronted with this number and burst into tears in the



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

middle of our test.

We just thought, “Oh, more information is always better.” We had no idea the ramifications of such a thing, and I feel like a lot of people, designers, today are experiencing moments like that where they have this information and people are more vulnerable than they ever were before, and we just don’t think about the impact of what it might be like to see things when we aren’t expecting them.

Timestamp: 00:10:42

Emily Lewis: I mean, I know other people who have mentioned this before. I’ve seen people talk about them on Facebook, but I absolutely hate the “here’s a memory from your past” thing.

Beth Dean: [Laughs] Very contentious.

Emily Lewis: Yeah, just the other day something came up that I didn’t want to see. First of all, I saw it on my phone and I couldn’t do anything except tell it to “don’t show more of these in the future” from my mobile device.

Beth Dean: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: So I went on the desktop to try and do more and it literally makes you go through a year’s selection to block out years. You can’t just like say, “Don’t do this anymore.” So I had to think back what were the difficult years that I don’t want to have to have this when I least expect it, but things come back.

Beth Dean: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: And it made me so angry....

Beth Dean: Like you have to...



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

Emily Lewis: Like please let me opt out of this entirely. Why are you actually making me have to think even more about the bad memory that you just showed me.

Beth Dean: Yeah, that's really interesting. You have to like go down memory lane.

Emily Lewis: Yeah. I don't understand why that something that they felt like you just got it, like you didn't get to choose whether you wanted to opt into that.

Beth Dean: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: It's not even an opt-out. You can opt out for some years, but God forbid, you don't pick the right ears.

Beth Dean: I believe you can opt out of memories with specific people too, like I got one the other day that was a photo of my mom, so a computer probably would look at that and think that it's something that's really high quality, there was a lot of engagement, it's a nice photo, but it was a picture I posted of my mom saying, "Every Mother's Day I get a thousand marketing emails about moms," and my mom is dead and I don't want them and there's no way to opt out. So this was like a memory to remind me of my unhappy memories.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Beth Dean: And it just goes to show you can only do so much with an algorithm, like the computers are only as smart as we tell them to be, so I share your pain there. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: I think you're right that we're living much more of our lives online in a personal way than ever before, and there are just of these things that are showing themselves. The service is



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

assuming that you're going to want this thing, and I have to ask myself, "Why did they make that assumption?"

Beth Dean: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: Because you're going through that exercise with the woman with her credit score, like are people doing user testing and actually trying to test the emotional aspects and factor those in, or are they going through road test of whether a task is completed?

Beth Dean: Well, for that specific team, I can't really speak to what they're doing because I don't work on that team. I think that, in general, this is something that's still really new to people. So back up to the precursor to On This Day, we had Year In Review, and Year In Review, the first year, it didn't go so great. Well, at least it didn't go so great for a few people, and Year In Review showed up on Christmas Eve and reminded some people of some very bad things that had happened with some confetti and some content that suggested, "Hey, you had a great year. Do you want to remember it?"

And not everybody has a great year, and I know that Facebook learned a lot from that. They've designed an experience that doesn't make so many assumptions, and I think On This Day was kind of the next logical progression. So it is a little bit different, but I can't really talk to what bullet proofing that team is doing, but it's like we're all just kind of learning these lessons, and the interesting thing about Facebook is because of the sheer scale of how we're designing, we hit these boundaries in human experience before many other products and services ever would, and that also means that what is a very small percentage of people for us is still a lot of people.

So for my own design practice here, first, I was working on Business Tools, so it wasn't something I had to think about so much as "Am I helping people get their jobs done? Am I helping them look



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

good for their bosses?” But when our issue with real names happened, I actually switched projects to go work on that. I’m sorry, but actually, I shouldn’t say real names. That’s sort of the public name. Facebook calls it authentic identity. And that was when I realized that I really cared about this and had the opportunity to affect emotional design at scale at Facebook, and so when I transitioned off of that project, that was when I intentionally joined the team that I am on right now, which was a longwinded way of saying I’m only just now in a position to incorporate these ideas into the beginning of my process, like before it’s been very reactive like going back and fixing things that maybe didn’t work as well as they could.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Beth Dean: So I’m kind of charting new territory now and thinking about this at the beginning of all of my work.

Emily Lewis: So what does that look like for you? Is that something where you have like a list of things that you reference or do you get to go with other team members and brainstorm, or are you dealing with users to talk about things before you actually build something?

Beth Dean: I’m only just now working on a project that I think is really, really going to take this into account, or I should say where it really, really, really matters. So it’s sort of an uncharted territory, but the things I’ve been thinking about are how do we assess risks, because it’s pretty easy for me to look at something from my perspective and think about my own experiences and say, “Okay, this doesn’t push any of the buttons that I have,” but that doesn’t necessarily mean it’s going to work for everybody, especially when you have so many people using your products. So I’ve been thinking, if



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

there's a way that I can maybe make some kind of like flow chart of questions I can ask myself just to identify where there might be points of risks and where I might need to back up and think about the problem a little bit more.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Beth Dean: I also think just a really fundamental part of design process will help people with this, which is just thinking about what are the problems that you're actually trying to solve, because I think a lot of times as designers we either take shortcuts to try and make an experience easier or I think we're going to do like what Lea said where we're going to surprise and delight somebody, but if that's not actually helping solve the user problem, we might just be introducing unnecessary risk into the process.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Beth Dean: So yeah, I've been thinking about it like, "Is there a list of questions I can ask myself?" And then the other thing I think is really important is to just get something in front of as many different kinds of people as possible, and what I mean is like people who have really different backgrounds and experiences because I can make a checklist and try and think about all the different types of trauma someone might have experience in their life, but it's probably going to be incomplete and it's going to be biased towards my life and the life of people around me. So I think just getting different people who just have completely different backgrounds isn't going to solve the problem, but it's going to help you uncover issues faster, especially if you can test an end flow with them.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

Beth Dean: Because I think about one experience I had was last year I was trying to book a cabin on Airbnb for my birthday, and I was having a really hard time. The first place I booked had to cancel because there was a wildfire, so it wasn't their fault that they canceled at the last minute and it's like two days before I'm supposed to leave and I've got to find a place, and I finally found something even though the search filters aren't working, so I'm really like frustrated and I'm emotional because I'm like worried if my birthday is going to work out or not, and it tells me that this property requires I confirm my identity, and I'm like, "Okay, that's reasonable. You know, if somebody is going to have another person up in their space, they want to make sure it's like a legit person."

So they gave me some options to scan my ID which I tried two different ways, and it fails, but it doesn't give me a very descriptive error message, so I'm like even more frustrated at this point. The app has sort of taken on a personality.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Beth Dean: I'm thinking that Airbnb is a person being mean to me.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Beth Dean: Like I'm like, "Airbnb, why aren't you letting me do this? Why are you trying to ruin my birthday?"

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Beth Dean: I'm like, "I'm a designer, and Airbnb wants to ruin my birthday." I've met some very nice people who work there, and so the next step it says, "Okay, there's another way you can verify your



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

identity. You can answer some questions for us.” And I’m thinking, “Okay, this will be really straightforward, and I think they scraped some government database. I don’t know if you’ve ever had the experience of really like signing up for a new credit card and to confirm who you are, they ask you some things like, “Have you lived at this address?”

Emily Lewis: Right.

Beth Dean: So it was one of those kinds of things, but it was at that point that Airbnb asked me if I knew my dead mom.

Emily Lewis: Ugh.

Lea Alcantara: Oh.

Beth Dean: The designers they were probably thinking, “This is really standard information.” They might not even have been thinking about what kinds of information that was going to be used because if it’s some kind of like government database, they’re probably just like scraping things at random, so nobody would ever have thought in a million years that there will be something there that’s contentious, but like what if I didn’t want to remember one of those places I live, because what if it was I lived there during a terrible marriage or something like that.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Beth Dean: And I’m just trying to book a vacation house, man, and you’re showing me this really awful stuff. I kind of got off on a tangent, but I think that with some user testing, if you have people who have a lot of different experiences and they really went through all of these stress hubs in the application.



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Beth Dean: Because a lot of times with user tests, like it seems people are going to go down a specific linear flow, and that's not always the case. I think that some of those kinds of things could be sauced out, and I also think it's pretty important to try and understand any of the places your experience is going to go down a different branch than the happy path and test all of those too.

Emily Lewis: You've talked a lot about the sort of emotional intelligence of designing for, I guess, avoiding the stress or the painful experiences. Is there a flipside of it? Is there an aspect of emotional intelligent designs that factors in for really positive experiences, and I don't know, perhaps leveraging that in some way to further a goal of a behavior on an app?

Timestamp: 00:20:16

Beth Dean: You know, that's a very good question. I don't know if I've seen any examples of that. Do you mean kind of like a behavioral hook that just has really positive reinforcement?

Emily Lewis: Yeah, I guess so. I mean, so much of this is really about the, I guess, "negative" aspects of an experience.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: But we also have the flip of that and I just wonder if there's anything about furthering that or using it to identifying, just like you're trying to identify where it might trigger someone to feel particularly stressed.

Beth Dean: [Agrees]



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

Emily Lewis: Is there the flipside of that where you could identify where it might really, I guess, the surprise and delight thing that Lea was talking about, like continue emotionally positive experience?

Beth Dean: Yeah, nobody has ever asked that before. I get asked for examples of positive examples, and I'm hard pressed to find them and I don't think it's because the state of design is terrible. I think this is just like really new territory and people are really just now starting to think about this. I can't think of any really interesting hooks, but I can think of a positive example of this, and it is Facebook. I'm not trying to shamelessly plug my own company.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Beth Dean: But Facebook has the custom gender option. You do not have to conform to a binary gender on Facebook, and this is reflected in the pronouns that the application shows.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Aha!

Beth Dean: And it is even reflected in the way that you are advertised to, because some advertisers choose to target a specific gender, and I think a lot of this stuff, it ties back to identity, right?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Beth Dean: Like you don't really expect major experiences in your life to shape your identity. You think of your identity as kind of the sum of like your hobbies and where you're from, and what your beliefs are, but when you have something really big happen, like your parent dying, that does become



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

part of your identity, and when you are confronted with something in an application that conflicts with that identity, it feels like it's questioning the very core of your being.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Beth Dean: So when an application actually can support your identity, especially when you're used to most things not really being aware of that, I think that's an opportunity, both to do the right thing and to add some delight. I hesitate to call it delight because that means that the bar is really low.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Beth Dean: People shouldn't expect to be supported in those ways, but I think that's an example of where things are going right now.

Lea Alcantara: I would think that there is another one that I can think of is that maybe being more clear, because we're talking about Facebook, be more clear about the positive experiences that you do have on Facebook, and I kind of have tweeted about this like a few months ago about how I absolutely love the Humans of New York Facebook page, and that whenever I read stuff there, even if it's sad, like my feeling towards humanity increases each time.

Beth Dean: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: And in terms of like making me feel better if there were mechanisms to basically saying, "More this, more this, more this," that would be a positive way to affect emotional design. Another thing that's a little bit more subtle is that I do like the feature in Facebook where you can essentially say, "I want to see updates from this person like first and more often."



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

So for example, I've starred all my sisters' Facebook posts so that the moment they posted something, because I know social media always changes their algorithms and sometimes it's not related to timeline anymore or in a particular order, linear order, so having options where it's like, "Okay, I want to see more from people I actually really, really care about more often," I think that's an example of a good emotionally intelligent design decision. I think the challenge is how do we make that more obvious.

Beth Dean: Yeah, I think that goes back to kind of the core of Facebook's mission, which is making the world more open and connected, but that's really deepening your connection with your sisters, right?

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Beth Dean: And I don't know, I feel like that's a really good mission, but there are times where I don't always want to be connected to everyone in the same way.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Beth Dean: And I think Facebook is doing a good job of giving us better controls, but it's funny to me because I think about how my family and I have really different ideas about politics.

Lea Alcantara: Right, yeah.

Beth Dean: And so when we get together, we usually just don't discuss those. We have a nice Thanksgiving dinner and we talk about literally anything else, but somehow on social media, I can be confronted with all of that stuff and be reminded of all of the things that my family and I disagree about.



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Beth Dean: And I have tools now to hide those things from myself that actually makes me not want to see more stuff from them, but how do I still see things like when my brother posts updates about my nephew.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Beth Dean: So I think you're on to something with sort of these more like positive controls rather than just like hiding things that you don't like or filtering things, like how can you reinforce what is working well.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Beth Dean: Yeah, and it works on that a little bit with advertising too.

Emily Lewis: So we've talked a lot about Facebook, and I think it's a good example because it's the thing that didn't exist before where we're engaged with technology, but in an extremely personal way, but I'm curious, where can emotionally intelligent design show itself in other online spaces? Like let's talk about like a corporate website. It occurs to me that a lot of what we're talking about is ultimately to have your user, your customer or your visitor, whatever you want to label them, connect with you in a positive way, so that's in part avoiding creating friction for them.

Beth Dean: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: And then the other part, which is what I think Lea and you were talking about, is reinforcing the positive aspects, and so this seems fundamental to me to essentially marketing. If



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

you're trying to connect with an audience, that's the fundamentals of how you do it, but thus far I feel like a lot of websites and marketing efforts are focused on making sure that the site is branded and that it reflects the brand of the company, which you draw the line that reinforces trust and integrity, and that you're putting content out there that your audience can connect with.

But what's beyond that in terms of like the design, the applying the emotional intelligence to a website experience and having those connections be positive and reduce the negative?

Beth Dean: Yeah, I think that's a really interesting question because when I think about the places online where I've had maybe the most frustrating experiences, it's usually when I'm trying to do something kind of utilitarian, right?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Beth Dean: I'm going to my bank and the bank is very concerned with branding and upselling me credit cards.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Beth Dean: But they're less concerned with making it easy for me to transfer money or take things out of the ATM because maybe they want to upsell me stamps.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Beth Dean: So I think there's tremendous opportunity there, and I actually am pretty heartened with what I've been seeing in that space. It seems like the bar for tools and enterprise design in general is getting much higher on the expectations around that or that it should behave more like consumer software, but I think there's also like voice and tone opportunities too, right?



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Beth Dean: Like you're always going to have sort of this I guess what you see, and I'm just going to go to a bank for an example again, and my bank software isn't particularly terrible so please don't think I'm picking on them, but you see sort of different product groups like duking it out within the application, like you see Marketing, you see whoever is like the product person responsible for these different sorts of like mortgage offers, trying to get their things in there.

So you see all of these things competing instead of a team of people thinking about what are the user goals and how do we put all of these things in here in a more natural way, but you also sometimes see a little bit of like this sort of marketing tone emerge where they see you coming in because you're happy and they want to make you more happy and they want you to buy more stuff and do more stuff, but there's also something to be said for just being kind of serious, and not necessarily being dry, but just acknowledging that you're here to do a job and that you want to get some stuff done and anything else on top of that is great, but that's not really why you're here.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Beth Dean: And I think that tone is starting to play a bigger role in a lot of these services. I mean, you see how huge Slack is now, and that's because people want like work software or tools to behave more like really fun consumer software. It's a little bit easier I think for consumer software to be less frustrating because the stakes are lower, right?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

Beth Dean: But you don't necessarily have to use it. I mean, maybe with Facebook use, they just stay connected, but with other things. You're using it because it's fun. If it's frustrating, you could just abandon it. It's not like an integral part of your life, but with something like banking or insurance, like you've got to use that stuff, like you don't have a choice. So I feel like that's shifting a little bit, but I think right now the biggest opportunity these organizations aren't going to fundamentally change is really nailing that voice and tone aspect.

Emily Lewis: And just to carry that thought a little bit further, I feel like a way that companies can begin to hit those notes appropriately is something you mentioned earlier and that's having more diversity within their company.

Beth Dean: Yeah, that is the thing.

Emily Lewis: So that the teams that are building things are reflecting a broader range of voices that can bring their own experiences and thoughts to the process to guide everything from the marketing, the words that they're using to defining the workflow of steps that someone has to get through to transfer money from one account to the other, and I think that that's something that Lea and I are seeing more. We're appreciating the value of that more, and seeing that that's something that really can help the people that Lea and I work for our clients, for them to do more with what they already have is to bring more perspectives into the process.

Timestamp: 00:30:01

Beth Dean: Oh absolutely, and I noticed it's kind of the foundation of some of the work I was doing at the White House. If you can't really make great products and services, if you're not meeting



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

everyone's needs, and if you only have one type of people... or one type of people, that's not even a thing you can say.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Beth Dean: One type of person. It's early and I haven't had enough coffee. Your experiences are going to be really narrow. You're going to make a product that works really well for one person and not everybody else.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Beth Dean: And I think maybe not enough companies recognize the value in that yet, but I love it. It's finally a conversation that seems to be at the forefront of design and development, so I'm really looking forward to seeing where that's at in like the next three to five years.

Lea Alcantara: So I'm a little bit concerned in regards to the fact that we've been talking a lot about emotionally intelligent design and the space and user experience in particular, like content strategy, that's great. But a lot of the software that we're talking about is largely driven by developers.

Beth Dean: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Is there anything that coders, developers, programmers need to consider and what can they bring to the table to be more emotionally intelligent about the products that they're actually building?



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

Beth Dean: Yeah, I think that's a really great question too. I probably said that about all of your questions this morning.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Beth Dean: But I think something I've seen shifting is that developers are much more product minded now, they care about the things that they're building, and they want to be involved earlier and earlier in the process, at least the ones I'm working with.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Beth Dean: And I think that when they become a part of the design and product definition process, they're really aware of why they're building what they're building.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Beth Dean: And they are really understanding who they're building for much more. I mean, when I look back to the Airbnb experience, that seems like something that probably a developer did. Like a designer probably came to a developer and was like, "Hey, what are the ways we can verify somebody's identity?"

And the developer was like, "I have access to this, let's put it in there," and like that may have been all the thought that was given, but if a developer had seen a bunch of user tests or just even knew what the general like personas were of the people using that application, that may not have happened. So I feel like the blending of design and development and just working really well cross functionally.



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Beth Dean: I think there are a lot of designers that want to work really siloed and they want to do their design work and toss it over to a developer, and maybe there are developers that like that where they're like, "Don't bother me until you're telling me what to code." But I don't think that's true anymore. I think everybody working together really early so everybody is really clear on what the value proposition is, it's what's going to help solve that problem. It also make developers better at their jobs because no developer just wants to be a code monkey, right?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Beth Dean: They want to feel like they're building something really, really well and that isn't just in the architecture of an application. It's like how people feel when they're done using it.

Lea Alcantara: So is there training for this? I know this is still kind of an emerging sector on the web, but do you just have like a giant team meeting with all stakeholders, including design and development, and then you just say, "Here are our goals, and part of our goals is to consider emotional intelligence."

Beth Dean: Well, I think it depends on your team, right?

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Beth Dean: So for me, like the way that I'm working is we do this thing called, like every big company probably does this, road mapping where you sort of figure out like, "What am I going to work on for the rest of the year? What are we going to accomplish like this half? And how will we know if we were successful?" So the way that we do that on my team and every team here is completely different. We go into a room together and we reevaluate like what is our team mission, and we make



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

sure that we're all in really, really clear agreement on that, and then we go from team mission to think about what are the problems that we need to solve to affect that mission.

People might have differing ideas so there's a lot of back and forth, but the important thing is to like keep away from solutions thinking like early on in the process and then everybody gets really clear on what the problems are we're trying to solve before people start proposing projects. With emotional intelligence, sometimes I think it's like a very project specific, but it's also something that just kind of has to be a part of your tool kit, like if you're thinking about, "Does this look good? Does this work seamlessly?" I think that's just another branch in that tree that you have to think about, but I also think there's opportunity when you're doing that product definition early on to identify where the gaps are and affect that.

So there's the project I'm going to work on this here that I can't really talk about what it is yet, but I felt like there was a strong emotional need for this, and so I came to this meeting with some mockups for this and I just showed the developers. I'm like, "Hey, this is why this is really important to me. I think this really affects people's feelings and we have a huge opportunity here to do something really good and to set a great example for how to design with emotional intelligence for the rest of the company to follow."

And they were really sold on that, so I think when you get developers involved really early in the process and they feel some ownership, they're going to respond really well and I don't know if it's as simple as just giving them some kind of training about like here's how you are emotionally intelligent now. I don't know if it works that way, but I think having a lot of honest discussions upfront and being really honest about where there's already risk and where there's already opportunity is key, and sometimes that honesty is really, really hard for people.



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

They have to really, really trust you to be comfortable speaking that because it could sound like you're blaming somebody else or blaming yourself for saying the work is deficient in some way when that's not always the case. Sometimes you just have new information later on.

Emily Lewis: So I really kind of carry on through Lea's question there about how like training. It occurs to me that this is the perfect kind of exercise for those things where companies take their staff to go do some retreats or whatever, that this would be a good...

Beth Dean: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: This would be a good theme for a retreat, but I really appreciated in the article you wrote for Medium where you sort of broke down a couple of characteristics of emotional intelligence, and I feel like me just reading it, it gave me a little fodder for how I could spend time with myself to try and heighten my awareness of these things, and the first one you mentioned is just the self-awareness to start, like you need to be aware that what you said earlier, your experiences are not other people's experiences.

Beth Dean: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: And if that's your starting point, I feel like that's already the beginning of trying to bring emotional intelligence into your process, if you just take that moment to really check yourself and remind you of who you are and where you fit in the world, and that everything you think isn't what everyone else kind of thinks.

Beth Dean: Yeah.



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

Emily Lewis: But I feel like those characteristics are all things that we could individually reflect upon too on ourselves before we begin or during the design or development of something instead of just a regular check but still coming from this place of understanding that you have to be empathetic.

Beth Dean: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: That you have to communicate clearly, you have to be transparent. You have to question not only your motivations, but what the motivations of the people you're building something for are. So I thought that was also very useful, maybe not for training, but just for helping yourself put yourself in the right mindset.

Beth Dean: Yeah, I think also one of the most important things I've learned along those lines, just as a designer in general, not even just about emotional intelligence is about responsibility. One of the things I've noticed in my career. I kind of have always followed just what's interesting to me, so as an illustrator, and then I started designing like semantic markup and got really excited about that and I wanted to do more like UI work, and then I got into usability, so I kind of like chased that dragon for a while, and I was like changing roles both to follow what was interesting and also because I was like, "Oh, well, I need to go to a place that values user testing, and then everything will be great."

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Beth Dean: And what I realized was nobody is going to let you do your job, like it's your responsibility to articulate what that is, what good design process is, what is important to the users, because that's not always clear to everybody else. They might not be designers. They might just be thinking about the problem in a different way, and it's kind of hard, especially if you're younger to know when to trust your gut maybe when something isn't quite right or you're missing something in the process.



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

Especially when you're working against really like hard deadlines, it's hard to be the person that's kind of sounding the alarm and saying, "Hey, hey, let's back up. Maybe that deadline is less important than this thing."

And so it took me really a decade to be more comfortable doing that, but I think that's something that if people just kind of have that in the background of their minds like, "What is their responsibility to the people that they're building for, and what is their responsibility to the people that they're working with, because there had been times where that's been a really difficult thing to do, but in the end people really appreciate it. It might be hard to begin with, but later they're always really, really glad that they did the right thing and that somebody showed them what that was.

Lea Alcantara: So I'm curious, you're talking about people's hesitations, like how they might now not necessarily have buy in, like what are the common concerns people have when you start approaching things to be more emotionally intelligent? And I mean, they just don't think that it's worth investing time in emotionally intelligent design.

Beth Dean: I think that you could abstract this as sort of any design problem in a large organization, like there's always this thing that you're going to think is really valuable, whether it's like making something look better or working slightly better, and maybe the cross functional people you're working with in your organization just have a different idea about what's important to them, like maybe what's important to them is speed, and maybe it's revenue, so the thing that you're pushing is always at odds with them.

So I feel like every designer has struggled with that kind of issue at some point in time. They're like, "I have this thing that's really important and I can't get somebody else to care." I mean, it's not because the other person is mean. They just like are having a hard time seeing your perspective. So



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

something that has worked well for me is, one, if you can show the numbers, which that gets into kind of dangerous territory too, because you can't quantify emotional intensity, right?

Timestamp: 00:40:06

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Beth Dean: So you might look at your numbers and say, "Well, all of these people are having a really great experience." So if like 0.1% of people aren't, who cares? But like how bad is the experience of that 0.1% of people compared to maybe how incrementally good the other experience is, but sometimes you can use numbers to show the way. So it's something that I worked on where we had this experience and people were like, "Well, how many people are really being affected by this?" And I was like, "Well, that's a really good question."

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Beth Dean: So I did some more digging and I had to enlist a lot of people who are like data scientists and have access to much more stuff than I do to answer this question, but what we found is that percentage-wise, it seems like a small amount of people are being affected, but in terms of volume, it was more than the number of Facebook employees that exist. So when somebody is confronted with a number like that, like it's kind of hard for them to say that it's not a problem worth solving, and then there's also something to be said for like showing and not telling, right?

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

Beth Dean: Like any business partner that sat in that user test with me where the woman was crying because of her credit score, they know immediately like, “We can’t do this.” People have hearts and they can’t always be there in the user test, but you’re usually recording that stuff, so like just showing how somebody is actually interacting with something I think is really powerful, and I also think sometimes you have to go a little bit rogue, and what I mean by that is if you’re trying to gain support for something that you haven’t done yet, sometimes you have to show somebody what that could look like for them to really get it. Because we sort of as designers take for granted that when we talk about something, we can see a really clear picture in our head of what that looks like and not everybody can do that.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Beth Dean: So when I was trying to plan my projects for the upcoming year and I had this thing that I really cared about, I just went and mocked it up and I brought that to my meeting and people were like, “Oh, this is what you’ve been talking about all along. Yeah, I totally get it now.”

And I’ve even had to do that with things that like aren’t emotionally related, like when I was working at Progressive, I could see that mobile was this really big shift that was coming, and this was when the first iPhone was out, so people didn’t have their phones quite as integrated into their lives as they do now, but we could see the tides were turning, like a lot more people were paying their insurance on their phones because it was easy and on the go, and I’m like, “We need to make a better phone version of this,” and like people were like, “No, that’s going to be really expensive. It’s going to take forever,” and I’m like, “Well, there’s this magical thing called mobile style sheets, and we can just like strip away all the stuff people don’t need and make this really a streamlined experience.”



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

So I wrote the code and hosted it on my own personal server because I couldn't get a dev sandbox, and then a coworker and I we started this like skunkworks team.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Beth Dean: We couldn't get any devices to test on so we went to the Verizon store and pulled up my like hardcoded files with this stuff to see how it worked on a bunch of different devices and we took pictures of it and we brought this back to our stakeholders and we're like, "Look, this thing is pretty much done already. You just need to give us a day to flip some switches and push this out into production," and people were like, "Well, it's already done, so we may as well do it, and things changed.

They saw a lot more people wanted to use their mobile services and they really doubled down on that now. So I think sometimes you have to not be afraid to, one, put the work in to like get your hands a little dirty, and also maybe like step out of your lane a little bit, which people don't always like, but I think when they see something really valuable in the end, they don't really mind doing that.

Lea Alcantara: I think that advice is just really good design and development advice, period, whenever you're talking to a bunch of stakeholders that might not be as technical or you're talking to executives who might not necessarily have the vision, like you mentioned, when the first iPhone came out, not everybody possibly understood what the next steps were, that you need to do the show, not just tell.

Beth Dean: Yeah, and that's kind of part of our responsibility as designers, like this is how we get buy in for anything with the people that we work with, like a picture is very, very powerful, that's why people put a premium on our skills and sometimes we think that we can just ask people for what we



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

want and that they should say yes because we're the designer and we have to do the work to build some trust, and that showing something tangible does that.

I think you cannot say enough for how important building trust is when you're working with like a large and cross-functional organization. That's like the bridge that you have to build to do less work to do the right thing like later on. Like once you've sort of shown somebody these examples of your vision several times, when this has been successful and you come to them like two years later and you're like, "Hey, I've got this idea," they're like, "All right, let's try it out," because you have a track record.

Emily Lewis: Yeah, that is a good tip for working in large organizations, and I say that because I didn't do that, and was very unhappy in an organization because I was definitely one of those squeaky wheel types.

Beth Dean: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: But I think because I just don't think I had the maturity then than I do now, that I was only telling.

Beth Dean: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: I never once made the connection that I needed to show why something was important.

Beth Dean: Right.

Emily Lewis: And I just kept getting frustrated. It never occurred to me to shift what I was doing to try and get buy in. I just kept expecting everyone else to just shift with me.

Beth Dean: Where you're just yelling over and over again.



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

Emily Lewis: Yeah, I've been trying to take my arguments to more and more people, but like I wasn't changing my argument to show numbers or value or anything like that. I think that's really, really an important lesson as you become a more mature professional. Lea and I get asked all the time from our clients to give them more data and more information, and we just do it now because we know it makes a difference.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Beth Dean: Yeah, and I think like a lot of organizations are just very revenue sensitive, so if you can tie the thing that you're trying to do through like revenue gain, people are going to be very, very supportive because that's how business people do their job. That's what they're accountable to. So you have to understand what the goals are of the people that you're working with. They're not on like a project by project basis, but like how do they articulate their success to their boss and their boss' boss.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Beth Dean: And if you know those things and can use your project as a way to help make them successful, they're going to be on board.

Emily Lewis: Yeah, and I think it's one of those things. It's like you said about how they have to communicate their goals and success to their bosses and so it's also vocabulary thing like maybe emotional intelligence is not the words you use to describe what you're trying to do.

Beth Dean: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: You put it in terms that they relate to, but the bottom line is it achieves both goals at the same time.



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

Beth Dean: Absolutely.

Emily Lewis: So let's say you've gone with a new product or a new campaign or something and you intentionally tried to incorporate emotional intelligence into your process with the whole team. How do you evaluate it if you're successful or not?

Beth Dean: Yeah, I don't quite know yet. My guess would be you'd put this thing out into the world and if you don't hear about anybody having a terrible experience.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Beth Dean: Now, that predicates itself on a lot of people using your tool and a lot of different kinds of people, but I also think you can measure some of this stuff before releasing it more broadly by doing a lot of really thorough testing. I mean, you're never going to see everything in testing, but I feel like times where I had planned for a lot of testing in my process have helped me see where things are going to run afoul ahead of time, but you also can collect feedback in your application, like you see sentiment surveys all over the place like, "How did you feel about this thing?"

I mean, again, you have to be careful because numbers can be interpreted however you want, but you can use combination of qualitative and quantitative tools, like one of the things we have in the tools that I have... So let me back up. When you work on ads like I do, one of the controls that you have for users is for them to see why they were served an ad on Facebook. There's literally a thing you can click called "Why did I see this add?" And there's an explanation there that tells you like, "Here are the things that we use to decide that this ad might be right for you."

And we ask you like, "Was this explanation useful?" And you can tell us, yes or no, and we keep track of that, and if it says no too many times, we know that this explanation like isn't really helpful



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

and people aren't necessarily feeling better about ads. So I think that you have to plan measurements in your process too, like you have to know what is meaningful, what does success look like, and like that's why we talk about that before we even talk about the scope of our projects or what features we're going to build because then you can work backwards from those goals and build all of like the logging that you'd need into the application.

Emily Lewis: So before we close up, do you have any, and you mentioned I think it was like the identity choices with Facebook as an example of a positive design where it creates less friction for people. Are there other designs that you've seen out in the world that you think are hitting the right note in terms of creating less friction or a neutral experience?

Beth Dean: I don't know if I would say it's neutral, but one of the most impactful things I've seen come out lately, and my friend Robin Kanner. She's an awesome designer. You should maybe have her on your podcast sometime. She designed this project called MyTransHealth, and it is really difficult for trans people to find good healthcare and compassionate providers, so she and a partner spent a really long time designing this process that I think just does a really great job because it's solving this really, really important need and the tone is spot on.

It understands what stresses that people are going through this process are in and really like it cuts through any sort of nonsense to just really get them exactly what they need. I feel like that is like the coolest thing that I have seen happen on the web in a really long time.

Emily Lewis: It sounds from what you described that it's kind of like what you're talking before, it's all the different areas from the content to the flow of the app to everything contributing to this frictionless experience. [Laughs]



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

Beth Dean: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, and it's an experience that I think a lot of people just by default like take for granted if they don't have the particular life that somebody else has. I definitely think that having an emotionally intelligent perspective allows you to do the mundane things that you mentioned like, "I need to go and see a doctor because I'm sick."

Timestamp: 00:50:10

Beth Dean: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: It would be easier.

Beth Dean: Yeah, like can you imagine using most healthcare websites like they probably have a binary gender option.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Beth Dean: So okay, maybe I choose woman, but if I'm not this gendered woman, that's going to bias the doctor around what my anatomy is, then how they're going to treat me, and so MyTransHealth is I don't think something that anyone without Robin's perspective could have made. So it also speaks to the importance of diversity and design too.

Lea Alcantara: Awesome.

Emily Lewis: So do you have any recommendations for reading or resources that you think can help our listeners kind of round out their mindsets have more emotional intelligence, more empathy, learning about the importance of those things in design?



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

Beth Dean: I do, and I know I was supposed to send those to you ahead of time, and I didn't think about them until this morning, so I'm sorry.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Beth Dean: There are two books that I've been recommending in all my talks. The first is Indi Young's *Practical Empathy*, seeing empathy has been this big buzzword, but people don't really know what it means. They conflate it in sympathy, and empathy is really about improving your listening skills. So Indi's book really hits how you as a designer and researcher can really do that and kind of strip away your own biases, and the other is Eric Meyer and Sara [Wachter-Boettcher].

I cannot pronounce her last name, but I wanted to give her full credit for this. Sara's book is called *Design for Real Life*. It's a book made by A Book Apart, and I feel like that is probably the most important design book that has come out in the last year, and it talks a lot about Eric calls the "stress cases" and not edge cases, and I feel like that should be required reading for like every designer.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Oh, fantastic. I feel like this is such an important episode, and I hope this really resonates with our listeners because there are so much practical, personal and professional benefits putting all of this in place in your day to day.

Emily Lewis: And it will affect all of us one way or another.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

Emily Lewis: Like all of us are going to have our own experiences and the more and more we're engaging with technology and apps and sites and devices, the more these things will be going to become important, and so the lessons that we're learning now will help all of us have better experiences online.

Beth Dean: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, absolutely.

Beth Dean: Yeah, I think what I was saying before is kind of the upstart to become personified as you use them.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Beth Dean: And if your app were a person, what would you want somebody to say about their interaction with that person when they walk away from it? Like you would want them to feel like they were respected and valued and listened to and not like they were pushed around.

Emily Lewis: Yeah, it's a perfect note to end on. I love it.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, absolutely, but before we finish up, we've got our Rapid Fire Ten Questions, so our listeners ...

Beth Dean: Oh, I'm so bad at these! [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Can get to know you a bit better. Oh, it's going to be fun. Okay, are you ready?



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

Beth Dean: All right, I'm braced.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Okay, all right. First question, morning person or night owl?

Beth Dean: Oh, it depends. I really want to be a morning person, but my body is usually a night owl.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs] What's one of your guilty pleasures?

Beth Dean: Pizza. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Beth Dean: I don't feel that guilty about that though. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Nice. What software could you not live without?

Beth Dean: I feel like I couldn't live without a lot of software. I use Sketch every day for better or for worse. It's full of bugs, but I rely on it to do my job.

Emily Lewis: What profession other than your own would you like to try?

Beth Dean: Sometimes I think about selling all of my belongings and becoming a mountain guide, and other times I wish that if life had gone a different direction, I would be like a museum taxidermist or one of the people that paints the backgrounds for the dioramas in the Smithsonian.

Emily Lewis: Oh.

Lea Alcantara: Very cool. What profession would you not like to try?



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

Beth Dean: I wouldn't want to be a veterinarian. I thought that I did when I was a little girl, and I shadowed one when I watched them neuter a dog and that was enough for me.

Emily Lewis: I had the same experience as a child. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Beth Dean: [Laughs] It was brutal.

Emily Lewis: Yeah, I wanted to be a vet my whole thing, and then I got some sort of opportunity to see a surgery once. [Laughs]

Beth Dean: I don't know why I thought that was a good idea, but I know now that's not a good idea.

Emily Lewis: If you could take us to one restaurant in your town, where would we go?

Beth Dean: Probably the Tonga Room. The Tonga Room is a historic bar in the Fairmont Hotel housed on what used to be the hotel pool and the pool is still there. It's a tiki bar and restaurant and there's a band that floats out on a raft every hour and a rainstorm falls on them and they play really bad music like you're at some terrible *bar mitzvah*.

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: And what kind of food is it? Is it like Caribbean?

Beth Dean: It's sort of like thick Polynesian. They redid the menu a few years ago and they upgraded so it used to be kind of like a Panda Express and now it's more like PF Chang's, but like the drinks are really what it's all about. The drinks are phenomenal now.

Lea Alcantara: Pretty cool. If you can meet someone famous, living or dead, who would it be?



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

Beth Dean: Oh no, I'm not prepared for that at all. I think I would pick the lady behind *Ask a Mortician* [Caitlin Doughty], the YouTube series.

Lea Alcantara: Oh, awesome.

Beth Dean: Yeah, she wrote a book too called *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes: And Other Lessons from the Crematory*. Yeah, she's pretty cool. I'd like to meet her.

Emily Lewis: If you could have a super power, what it would be?

Beth Dean: To be invisible.

Lea Alcantara: What is your favorite band or musician?

Beth Dean: Well, I don't know. That depends on the day. I can give you so many different things. I think probably if you were to look at my record collection, most of it is like 60's soul and girl groups, so it's something in there, probably the Ronettes. My all-time favorite record is the Ronettes' *Be My Baby*, so let's go with that. I'll double down there. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: All right, last question, pancakes or waffles?

Beth Dean: French toast. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Nice. Nice.

Emily Lewis: You're the second French toast to give...



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

Beth Dean: No, I was actually just being contrarian. I think chocolate chip pancakes probably.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Awesome. Perfect. That's all the time we have for today. Thanks for joining the show again, Beth.

Beth Dean: Thanks ladies.

Emily Lewis: In case our listeners want to follow up with you, where can they find you online?

Beth Dean: Probably the best place to get at me is on Twitter, and my handle on Twitter is just my name [@bethdean](#).

[Music starts]

Emily Lewis: Great. Thanks again, Beth. It was great having you back on the show.

Beth Dean: Thank you.

Lea Alcantara: CTRL+CLICK is produced by [Bright Umbrella](#), a web services agency obsessed with happy clients. Today's podcast would not be possible without the support of this episode's sponsor! Thank you, [Visual Chefs](#)!

Emily Lewis: We'd also like to thank our partners: [Arcustech](#) and [Devot:ee](#).

Lea Alcantara: And thanks to our listeners for tuning in! If you want to know more about CTRL+CLICK, make sure you follow us on Twitter [@ctrlclickcast](#) or visit our website, [ctrlclickcast.com](#). And if you liked this episode, please give us a review on [iTunes](#), [Stitcher](#) or both! And if you really liked this episode, consider donating to the show. Links are in our show notes and on our site.



<http://ctrlclickcast.com/episodes/emotional-intelligence-in-design>

Emily Lewis: Don't forget to tune in to our next episode when we're going to talk about data-driven design with Matthew Oliphant. Be sure to check out our schedule on our site at ctrlclickcast.com/schedule for more upcoming topics.

Lea Alcantara: This is Lea Alcantara ...

Emily Lewis: And Emily Lewis ...

Lea Alcantara: Signing off for CTRL+CLICK CAST. See you next time!

Emily Lewis: Cheers!

[Music stops]

Timestamp: 00:56:43