



# S1:E2 "Anti-Fancy" Transcript

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**Karen Costa:**

Welcome to the ADHD gallery, a podcast about teaching, learning and living with ADHD. My name is Karen Costa, and I'll be your host and curator. This podcast is for the ADHDers of the world. People like me. Join me to venture through this gallery of ideas, curiosities, brain science, random hyperfocus interests, and reflections on what it's like to live with the gifts and many challenges of ADHD. Fellow dopamine hunters, let's be weird together. Stay connected at [theADHDgallery.com](http://theADHDgallery.com). I'm aiming to be increasingly less active on social in the coming months, and maybe even years. So my website and email newsletter will be the best way to stay in touch.

Hello, everyone, and welcome to episode two of the ADHD gallery. Come on in. My name is Karen Costa. I'm joined by Rocky, who you might have just heard, and I'm your host and curator. Today's episode is called "Anti-Fancy."

So I wanted to start with a quick recap of episode one, which I recorded with Rocky, my dog, on my lap, because when he hears me talking, he gets excited. Probably a little jealous, somebody else is getting my attention. But it seems that if I put my leash, put his leash on him, and on my lap, he goes into freeze mode, which is what we have now, but you might hear the occasional dog sound. I wanted to give you a little explanation of what that was. I also, after recording Episode One, ran into some roadblocks with the tech around uploading the podcast trailer to Apple, and it just feels like there's 100 steps and details that goes along with this. And I'm trying to roll with it. Apple was really good about it. They fixed it probably within 24 hours, but I share this with you because I definitely had those "forget this" thoughts running through my head. And as I, you know, sat down today, Rocky was bouncing around the hallway, and I said "You do not look like a dog that is going to be a good co-host. You look like you're going to make noises." But the option is to not do it. Right? I'm a human being. I have people and things and animals around me. I'm not in a podcast studio. I don't have a producer handling the tech. I am on my own, and I'm going to do it anyway. Which actually leads me into today's episode: "Anti-Fancy."



All right, let's travel back a couple of months ago when I was introduced, again, by Marlee Grace - Thank you Marlee - I was introduced to Notion. Now I'm probably not going to do this right but here's how I describe Notion. I guess it's a database management platform. I don't really think of what I'm creating as databases. It's just a tool that I'm using to dump the entire contents of my brain into in a somewhat organized fashion. And we're going to talk more about that concept of what some folks call a second brain in a future episode. So I'm introduced to Notion a couple months ago, and I love it. It's also the system I'm using to plan this podcast by the way. So I went to, right after I was introduced to it, I went to this online conference. It was free. I stumbled upon it in, you know, one of my random internet searches going down the rabbit hole. Right after I had learned about Notion I'm googling Notion classes, Notion events, things like that. And there was this what looked like a really cool event that included a lot of workshops on Notion.

I went to two workshops. The first was all about ADHD. And the panelists were ADHDers, people like me, and they didn't talk a lot about Notion. It came up as a tool, but mostly they talked about just being creative humans who live with ADHD, and how they manage it, which was great. So the second workshop I go to is on using Notion as a second brain, which again, we'll talk more about that in a future episode. So I thought okay, this sounds cool. I'm gonna learn something great. Within two minutes, maybe less, I had no idea what this man was talking about. Literally none okay? But something really interesting happened. When I noticed that I had no idea what he was talking about, I realized that in the past, in that moment, I would have felt small, because I didn't understand him. I would have felt like there was something wrong with me, and it's very likely I would have given up on Notion entirely. Instead, I said to myself, calmly, very matter of factly, "This guy's a super user. That's cool. I'm not." And that was it. "He's a super user. I'm not. Great."

I stayed in the workshop for probably another 10 or 15 minutes. Not actually because I thought I was going to learn anything that would be valuable to me. But I thought it was kind of interesting to observe a super user being super. It is cool to go that deep into something and to be the person who knows every single detail and hack and cool thing about Notion or whatever. It was cool to watch that. It's not my path, but I can respect it. So I stay to just watch that person, you know, be super at being super. But again, as I was sitting there watching him I didn't feel small at all. I just felt sort of neutral and curious. And as I was watching during those 10 or 15 minutes, I remembered that I've



actually written an entire book, which was actually, you know, dedicated to not being a super user.

As someone with ADHD, I forget stuff. Right? And I sometimes forget that I wrote an entire book. And I forget that I know things. And I forgot that my book was really about anti-fancy, about not being a super user. So as I was sitting there, I said, “Karen, you've, you've learned this lesson before. You've been down this road before.”

I'm wondering, my fellow ADHDers, do you also ever learn really important life lessons? And then you forget them until you're back in that issue? And then you realize 10 or 15 minutes later, a couple days later, “I think I've learned this life lesson, but my ADHD made me forget it.” So I don't need to like go through the whole life lesson again? I actually know this, right? So in that moment, I thought about my book. My book is called *99 Tips for Creating Simple and Sustainable Videos*. So right there in the title, simple and sustainable. When I started making videos, here's the deal, I started making videos for my students, my online learners, because I felt like it was a way to connect with them and improve their learning experience. This was probably around 2008, a long time ago. And as I started to put out feelers and look for resources on how to make engaging quality videos, I was immediately pulled into the world of super users. They would say to me, “Karen you have to do this, and you have to buy this and you have to learn this very fancy, complicated tool, and you have to record these very fancy types of videos.”

I was told once that students only want Hollywood level productions. So I was buying into that, and I was absolutely succumbing to that pressure. That I was, you know, a basic user, and that you had to, if you were a basic user, you had to go further or go up in the hierarchy, and you had to become a super user. So I bought this video production set, I don't even know, it had lights. It had a backdrop. I turned a room in our house into like a video production studio. And by the way, that, you know, video production set is in a bag in my basement many years later. And what happened as I got further along this path, or as I moved up this hierarchy, I stopped wanting to make videos. I went through a term where I didn't make any videos for my students. And once I got through that, once I had kind of thrown in the towel and said um, this is no fun anymore. I'm not going to make any videos. I kind of came to my senses. And I said to myself, I don't think this is about the videos. I think this is about the pressure to make some fancy videos, some Hollywood style production. So I swung, back the pendulum swung, back in the other direction, and I said to myself, I am going to make the most basic, simple videos



humanly possible with the least amount of effort possible. And my priority is going to be not the tech, not making some hyper produced fancy thing. My priority is going to be to look into that little, my webcam on my computer, and talk with my students, and just send them so much love and positivity and just be real and human with them.

Everything else, let the chips fall where they may. I promise myself if I make a mistake, I am going to keep going. And I am going to set myself up with the simplest processes. Is that a word? The simplest processes possible. What happened was, I got my joy back. I started to make videos again. And then I started to share this anti-fancy approach with other educators. And when I did, they would just kind of look at me and say, oh my gosh, thank you because I have been hating making videos or dreading making videos because I was told that they had to be this and this and this and this. And then after some time of talking to fellow educators about making anti-fancy videos, I wrote a book about, you know, *99 Tips for Creating Simple and Sustainable Videos*, which could have also been called *Anti-Fancy Videos*.

I spoke in episode one, about what I started calling the Marlee course, that I took with Marlee Grace, and how they talked about making podcasts by just talking into their phone and pushing publish, and how that's the approach I'm aiming for with this podcast. And I think for folks with ADHD, this might not be true for all of us, I'm not sure that fancy is our friend. Maybe it's our friend for some things and not others. I don't know, but I don't think fancy is my friend. You know that saying "Don't let perfect be the enemy of good"? Or I'd even say good enough, done. Right? Just done. And that is really the approach I'm taking with this podcast. And I think it's an approach that I want to name and notice and celebrate and embrace in my own work and life. And now an approach that I want to share with all of you.

I guess some folks might call this minimalism. I call it anti-fancy. And if you are fancy, and if you are a super user, 100% respect. Like I'll still probably show up to your workshop sometime, just to watch you do the things that are super and fancy, right? But it's also cool, I think, to find a simple and sustainable way to share your work with the world. So if there's something that you want to do, or learn more about or share with others, and you too, have fallen into the trap of the super user, super users are friends, but we don't all have to be super users. And if you've fallen into that trap, maybe, maybe try the path of anti-fancy. I do also wonder here about the effect of RSD which is rejection sensitive dysphoria, which is incredibly common in ADHDers. I wonder about the connection between RSD and this pressure to be super users and being shut down by the feeling that we have to be perfect. So I know that embracing anti-fancy might be



hard for those of us who have been shamed for doing things in our unique ADHD way. We have absolutely been shamed for not paying attention to details as if details, you know, are the end all be all. They have their place, right? But they're not everything. And I do know that so many of us have been shamed for that. You know unique, creative, chaotic, start things but not always finish them do things in our own way anti-fancy energy, so not saying anti-fancy is going to always be easy for some of us. This is, again, a lesson I have learned several times over and I will continue to learn. 100% something in the future will call to me, and I will go in to learn about it, and I will feel like I'm supposed to do it the fancy way, and I will feel the pressure of the superuser because I will forget that I ever recorded this podcast or wrote an entire book or talked to anybody about being anti-fancy. I will forget because I have ADHD, but then I'll remember, so I won't have to learn the entire lesson again. I will just kind of do a refresher lesson.

Okay, everyone. That's a wrap for Episode Two. Thank you so much for making the time to listen today. I know that you have a lot of choices about what to give your attention to. And it's an honor truly that you chose me and the ADHD gallery. Your support means the world to me. Please rate this podcast, share with your friends and colleagues, and of course make sure to sign up for my email list by visiting [theADHDgallery.com](http://theADHDgallery.com) Thank you, friends