

Wide Awake Bakery

What do you think daily life is like for bakers? A lot of people think bread-making must be incredibly boring. Do you too?

Before you watch

Match the words with the definitions.

a variety of	to suffer unpleasant feelings, such as worry or boredom
to climb the walls	to achieve something or do something right
to nail something	a number of different types of things
a sweet spot	boring, ordinary, and not original
conscious	aware
banal	the perfect location

Transcript

Stefan Senders: I don't want to say that the bakery is an experiment... but it's more like, it's more like saying Why not? Why not do it right?

My name is Stefan, Stefan Senders, and I'm a baker. I run the Wide Awake Bakery. David McInnis: My name is David McInnis, and I am a baker at the Wide Awake Bakery.

Stefan: A lot of people think bread-making must be incredibly boring, so there was this first year where people would come stop by the bakery and they'd say, Can you stand... you know, How's it going, man? and they'd look at you with this way like, like, How's your mental health? you know? And... kind of figuring that at some point I'd be climbing the walls because it wasn't that exciting and every day I have to do the same thing over and over again. But actually, to me, there's a real pleasure in that; it goes back to this issue of practice, where this thing of getting deeper and deeper into something and figuring out the... the minutiae of it and how it feels. And there's always that kind of a sweet spot when you really just, just nail it.

David: You're learning a dance, and you're thinking about the steps all the time, and What step am I going to do next? And you're so conscious of like... the... conscious of the dance, you're thinking about what you're going to be doing and what you're supposed to be doing. And when you learn the dance, you just kind of do it; you don't have to think about it anymore. And I think that once you learn it and once you can just do it without being so conscious of it, then you really start to become it, or it starts to become you in a new kind of way, and I think you

can really thrive within those... within those boundaries. You've now learned it, and you can now do something new within it.

Stefan: You're working with these microbes that you can't see, in partnership with them, and you're trying to think, you know, What would they like? Would they like it a little warmer? You know, and you're trying to make them happy. And, when do you have to get this bread out? How strong is the flour this week? And so you're trying to balance all these things, so it gets intellectually quite complex.

And then, when the loaves finally get to that point of being ready to go into the oven, you've done all this very physical work, and it sort of gets progressively finer until you're just putting that thing in. And you take that little razorblade, and you just say [Stefan makes cutting sound]. And you're making that beautiful visual pattern, and then you've got to catch it when it's at its peak, and you bring it out, and it's just full of charisma and its fabulous, and it's a very whole project.

David: Some objects suggest that the world is actually, basically banal and kind of perfunctory and ho-hum, and they invite kind of indifference I think is what those things do. And I think that other objects might suggest something more like that the world is full of grace and bounty and beauty, and they invite, instead of like, indifference, something closer to love. I'm interested in making something that invites love as a response.

Stefan: You know, we are fueled by, you know, this incredible energy around here. It's like a magic spot. People are so full of passion to make great food and to really change the way we look at the world. Right here, right, from their own houses and in their own ground. It's so inspiring, so it's easy to get up every day and think, Let's go stack some wood, man! Light that fire! It's not difficult.

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After you watch

Try to tell the story to a friend using three new words that you have learned from the video. Also, remember you can read the transcript at any time.

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