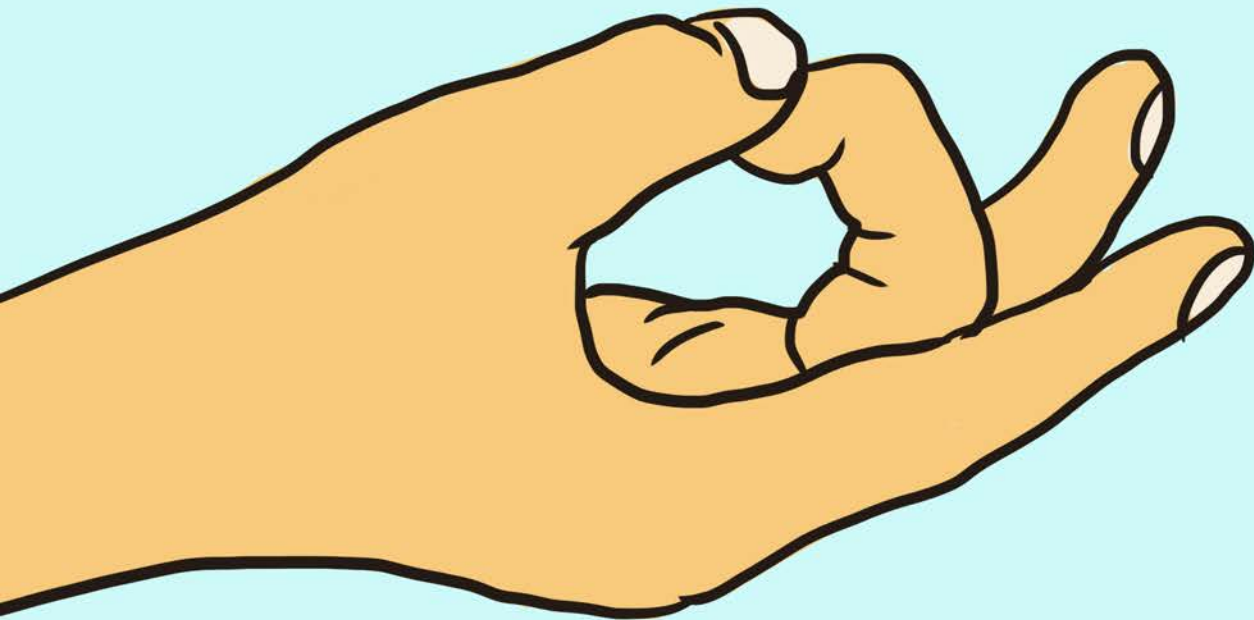


Meaning making
during a pandemic

A new course on
digital storytelling

Season 2
Episode 6:

The digested read by
Azam Masoumzadeh
Andrea Geipel
Abhay Adhikari



our host for this series of meaning making are:



Andrea Geipel



Abhay Adhikari

our guest speakers



isabel cz



Kush Sethi

our digital producer is:



Jenni Mueller

This was our last episode of Meaning Making and we wanted to wrap up with a subject that is important to all of us:
SUCCESS!

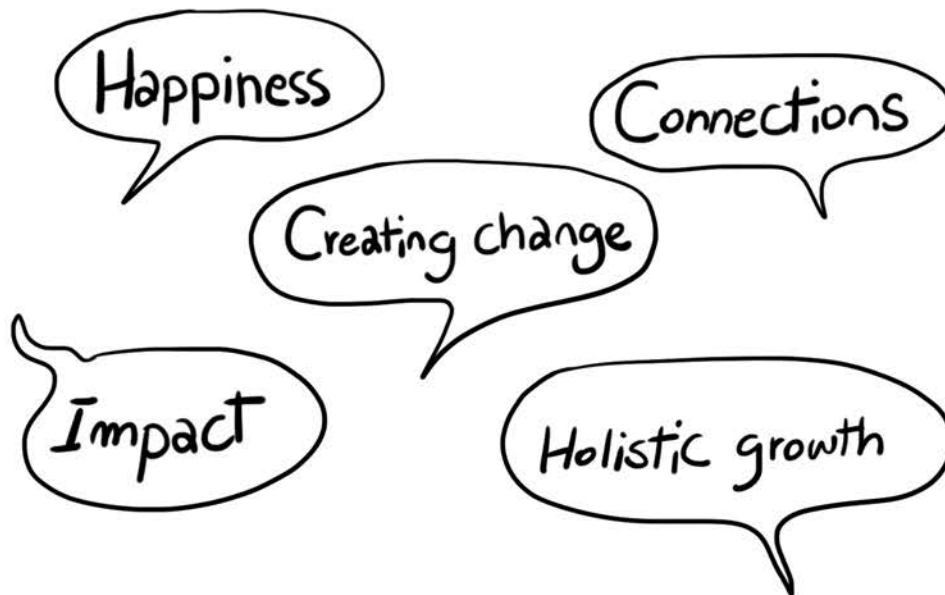


We had two guest speakers who showed us how achieving success is related to our mindset. By sharing their personal experiences we also realised there is a close relationship between how we define success and our personal values



Hello I'm Isabel. I work on digital engagement projects with interesting people and organisations across Spain.

Isabel began her talk by asking our participants:
What does success mean to you?



So many nice answers. I was expecting numbers - financial growth, number of visitors! I can see I'm in the presence of thoughtful people



I love the answer holistic growth!

I wrote holistic growth, because at the end of the day, there is no 'one way' to succeed. It's about growing as a person and learning from failure



Gerhard

like a little grain



Natalie, as you are our evaluation guru, we'd love to hear how you define success



Success for me is about creating change!



like plants
That change
their ways if
they have to
but they don't
stop growing!



Let me tell you how I came to redefine what success looks like



A couple of years ago, my team and I put our heart and soul into organising an event. We were so excited to try something new

But on the day of the event, we had a lot of rain. And we had to cancel everything!

Of course everyone was disappointed. But this was a turning point for me in thinking about success. Even though we hadn't delivered the event, we had learned and experienced so much about working as a team!





Since then my recipe for success is...

- Define what you think success means for you and your team
- Measure your work against that definition
- Report the outcomes to all your stakeholders
- Repeat the exercise

As long as the report starts from the beginning and presents the project as a narrative, rather than a series of isolated events



I can see how this recipe helps you tell many different stories about success. It's not just about reporting numbers





Andrea: So if success is about telling stories, how do you measure it?

That brings me to my second question for our participants: how do you measure success?



For our festivals, we measured success in ticket sales and audience numbers. But with COVID that changed. But it wasn't all bad news. When we took our "traditional" Festivals online we found that our reach and audience numbers grew!

But, it's not just about the numbers. The well-being of my colleagues is also important. So I guess, success is about keeping a balance between work and play



Gerhard

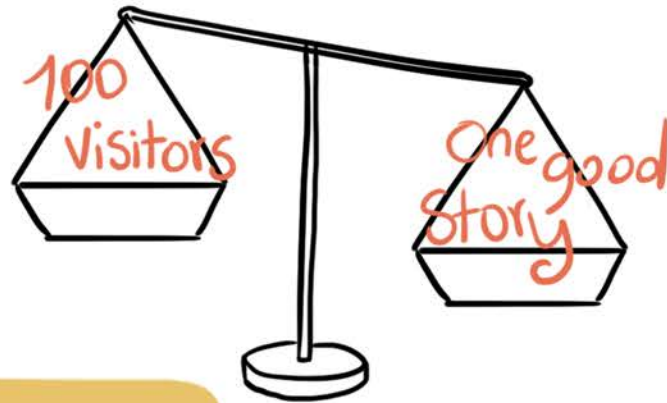
Success is
feeling
good





Padmini

I agree. Numbers don't always tell the full story. An exhibition may have 100s of visitors. But how many of them truly enjoyed and engaged with it? Isn't that a more important measure



couldn't agree more! Success is not about the numbers. So it goes back to the point I made, it's about the stories - not just what happened, but how we worked, how people felt when they engaged with the work, what has changed..



Stories are so important when we talk about our work. They add context and layers of meaning to our projects



Our second guest speaker was Kush Sethi



I call myself a gardener, forager and educator. I've lived in India for most of my life, except for the two years that I was in England for my Masters Degree in Green Chemistry



But plans always change. When I came back to India, I realised I didn't want to work in the field of my study! I spent so much time thinking about my city - Delhi, that I felt I must do something related to it

And so I joined the project - Delhi I Love You (DILY) to celebrate the diversity and cultural heritage of our city. We got to do so many interesting things - from walk festivals to talks, from arts projects to historical visits

And I started to think - how do we share so many diverse experiences so that people can understand and appreciate the success we've had. I didn't have an answer, but it was one piece of the puzzle in defining what success looks like



After DILY, I got interested in gardening. Now, I love working with people from all backgrounds to create greenspaces both indoors and outdoors. It's fascinating to see how people change and evolve as their gardens grow from mere saplings to lush and interesting spaces that are calm and restful

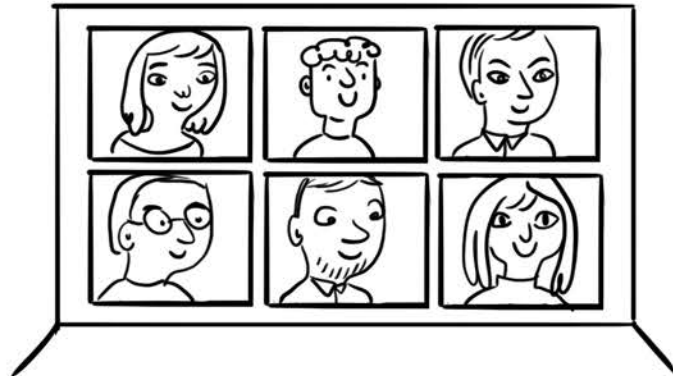


And so, I found the second and perhaps the most important piece of the success puzzle. Success is not just about what I think, it's also what other people value in the projec

So success is about stories like Isabel said. But the source of these stories are the experiences we share



Abhay: happened to the participants. Everyone was smiling.

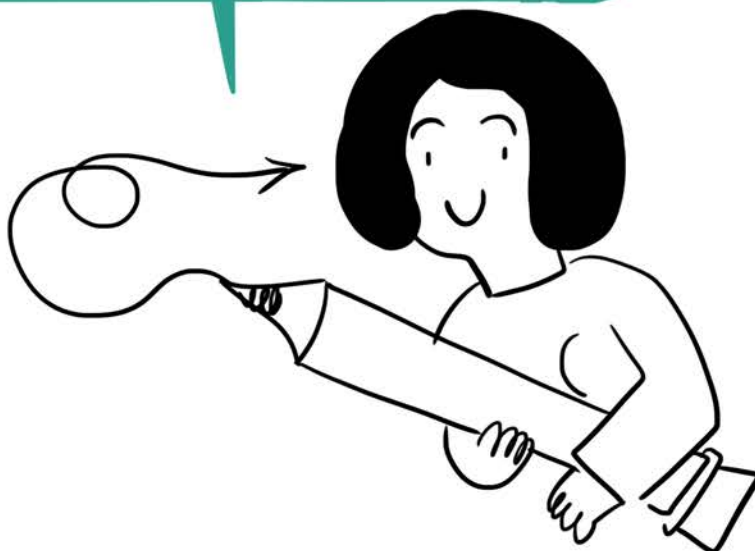


Yes, that's true. And I think the message from Damian in the chat window explains this

Damian

I love the photos that Kush is sharing. It's obvious, he loves his work...

And that's when we came to the conclusion, success is defined by our values and not how others perceive us.



And so, the second season of Meaning Making comes to a close. It has been a wonderful adventure and a privilege to meet people across the world who are so passionate about what they do and really want to try and make a difference in their communities



We'd also like to thank our participants who took part in the mentoring session and ran experiments in Italy, India and Germany. We hope to share the results as case studies in the future.

The season was full of surprises. There were moments when I was so inspired by our speakers. And the participants were equally inspiring. So often, I had pages upon pages of notes to turn into a comic. Thanks to Abhay and Andrea who helped me edit them into these comics



goodbye!
We will see you in the new year



Thank you to everyone who participated in
Episode 6 of Season 2
of Meaning Making During a Pandemic



Illustrated by: Azam Masoumzadeh