

Ange:

So, hi, I'm Ange and this is how I Wordle. So every morning when I open the game, I sort of get quiet. I close my eyes and I wait to see what word pops into my head. I go from there. So it could go anywhere. I consider myself highly strategic, but in a very intuitive, occasionally chaotic way.

Chimmy:

And hi, I'm Chi and this is how I Wordle. So I know that there are fewer vowels than consonants in English, so I start with a vow in each word, like adieu. And then I rely on statistical odds of having consonants. So more of a traditional strategist, if you like. I'm curious how many people feel like they're more Ange in the way they approach things. Okay. Fair few. And how many people think that they're more like me in how they approach things? Okay. I mean, it's really good that there's some people that are not one or the other. We'll talk about it more.

Ange:

Okay. Let's go a bit deeper than just our word game strategies and tell you a bit about who we are. So I'm Ange, this is Chimmy, and together we are Lovable.

Chimmy:

So, Lovable is a design studio for when we're working intentionally together. When we're not working, we ... This is going to be interesting. We work together on creating digital products and experiences that people fall in love with. Ange does the copy and brand strategy stuff and I'm general UX, sort of unicorn type person who does flows and layouts and things like that. We're also a couple. So we live in London with our two very cute cats, Wealth and Leola.

Ange:

We met at a conference very much like this one in 2018 in San Francisco when Chimmy was living in London and I was living in Toronto. And over the course of that weekend, along with a series of very long transatlantic WhatsApp messages, we fell in love from the beginning. It was clear that we have a lot in common. We both love love, rom coms, travel, food design, all-day Murder She Wrote marathons. But it was also clear that we are very, very different because Chimmy is a thinker.

Chimmy:

And Ange is a feeler. But before we go on, we need to talk about what we actually mean when we talk about thinking and feeling in this talk. Spoiler: thinkers, they feel, and feel think as well. But it comes down to what sense guides how you make decisions and move through the world. So Carl Jung's theory of personality. If you make more of your decisions from a place of data and analysis, then you would consider yourself more of a thinker. But if you make your decisions based on other people's or your feelings, values, and tastes, then you're more likely to fall into feeling.

Ange:

So we found a couple of interesting stats that get at the fundamental differences. 83% of people with the thinking trait say it's best to take a scientific approach to their problems in their lives compared to 43% of those with the feeling trait. And 65% of those with the feeling trait say they mostly listen to their hearts when they make an important choice compared with 7% of those with the thinking trait. So first we want to be really clear. This is a very binary system and people are complex. So this is not going to

apply across every aspect of your life. But in terms of understanding yourself and the people you love and how you relate to one another, we've found it super helpful.

Chimmy:

I actually learned all of this thinking/feeling stuff as a work leadership training thing a few days after I met Ange, and I excitedly shared my learnings with her in those transatlantic WhatsApp messages. In the session when we talked about thinking and feeling, the trainer asked the question, if you were driving to a barbecue and encountered a deer in the road, such that you had to drive around the deer to get to your destination, what would you do? I see some shocked faces. Unfortunately, I'm an extrovert, so I think outside my mouth. And so I said the truth, which was, I would carry on to the barbecue. And when I got there, I'd talk about the potential dead deer and ask people what we might do to sort out the problem. When I told Ange and the other people in the room who were feelers, they were shocked and horrified.

Ange:

Legitimately horrified. Because I was sitting there being like, "Oh no, the poor deer." Like, what about the people behind me on the road? What if somebody comes along and they don't see it and I get into a crash. But what's happening at the party? Who's there? Is it a surprise party? Like, am I going to disappoint someone if I don't get there on time? What am I going to do?

Chimmy:

Yeah. So I'm about as far away from feeling maybe as Ange is from thinking. But what does any of this actually mean for creativity and creative work? I've done lots of work with different kinds of companies, different kinds of people, and what I've found is that when creative people do business, capitalism, try to earn money, those sort of things, there are kind of two things that happen. You either get caught up in the business side. You're trying to make money. You're focusing on outcomes and the impact of your work. And so you push the creativity and creative process out of your business process. So it's something separate from what you do. Or you're a total creative, like Ange, obsessed with creativity, and somewhat resentful that other non-creative people would dare to ask you about such trivial things like numbers, things that interfere with your creativity and creative process.

Ange:

So when we met and started working together, we realized there was this completely different approach that maybe we didn't understand, but that proved incredibly valuable. So as a thinker, Chimmy is amazing at structure. She's great at making design efficient at communicating impact and outcomes, at working with data, and making decisions and making sure that every decision aligns back with that goal. But she can sometimes be so quick to define the goal and the outcomes that she skips over the dreaming stage. And when the people she's working with aren't clear on what exactly they want to achieve, she can get super frustrated. She also cares infinitely more about the outcomes of a project than about the feelings of anyone involved, which can lead to conflict and occasional hurt feelings.

Chimmy:

Annie has worked with both of us. So you can ask her independently what she thought. Now, Ange, as a feeler, is amazing at tuning into the feeling of a brand and creating from there. She knows when a piece of copy or a design feels right in a way that's really hard to explain if you don't experience it. She's super empathetic, great at making people feel really comfortable, which comes in handy if she's interviewing

people. She's also great at helping people tune into their big vision. But quantitative data, analysis, rigid processes? Why are you doing that? These things don't come naturally to her. And so she can struggle to set and measure numbers-based goals, which means she has a harder time communicating her decisions and selling the impact of her work. Now, we've talked a little bit more about that, I'm going to ask again, who feels like they're more like Ange? Ah, some people recognize it now. And how many people feel like they're more like me and would go to the barbecue before they worry about the deer?

Ange:

Oh. Oh. And has anybody's answer changed?

Chimmy:

Yes. Okay. Some people put their hands up.

Ange:

I missed it. So you might guess ... Oh, I'm going back. We're not there yet. Okay. As you might guess, this difference in approaches can be a source of conflict and we occasionally do find ourselves at odds, but it has become a huge asset when we work together. So by working together and integrating those two strengths, we've been able to elevate our creative work.

Chimmy:

Here's one of the first projects that we both worked on together. Clipping Path India, a Bangladeshi company named for SEO wanted a new brand that would position their services better with their target American and European customers. Ange was responsible for the brand strategy, helping us create a richer, more evocative design copy, and brand experience. I helped everyone focus a little bit more on what we needed to change in terms of the flows and base user experience in order to deliver something that was focused on more transparency in how equipped was generated. Go on. Look at the reveal. What do you think? Should we go back to the old brand? So what we launched wasn't just-

Ange:

Go back for a sec. Beginning, before, after.

Chimmy:

Okay. I heard the words amazing. That's good. So what we did was launch something that was better on two fronts. The new brand resonated more with the audience that we're targeting, creating a 500% uplift in signups and quote requests. But we didn't just go increase acquisition and brand. We also did some downstream improvements. So the change to the transparency in the pricing and the code process meant that we also saw 140% more people who requested a quote and actually bought. So, a double win.

Ange:

All right. Now we're going to get into how you can think and feel better, even if you don't have your own Ange or Chimmy. So yes, our work together is stronger than what either of us could do alone. But we have also found that those ... We've taken things, even when we're working on our own, which we do quite a bit. So that's what we thought we would try to bring to you, which is a set of practices that can help you bring both the thinking and the feeling into your own work, even when you're working alone.

So you can think of this as having an imaginary Ange and Chimmy that you can call on whenever you're starting a new project.

We're going to start with feeling because as we were putting this talk together, it just kind of felt right. But it's also because I think that feeling is, for me, best at the beginning of a project. I really use feeling to tune into the big picture vision for what I want to create. And then when it comes to how we make that happen, that for me is when rational thinking becomes super useful. So this is especially true for anything that involves bringing something new into the world, so when you're doing a branding project or a rebrand or working on a new product or idea.

But why? So let's talk a little bit about what feeling a bit more can bring to your creative work. It can help you connect to that deeper vision so that you find yourself working on the thing you really want to bring into the world and not just the thing that makes the most sense. Your design, copy, and brand experiences can create a deep emotional response in people. It can help you make sure that your final project reflects and aligns with the values that you care about most. And it can help you create a generally great work experience where people feel heard and collaborative along the way.

Diving in, the number one thing I need you to know, whether you are a thinker or a feeler, is that you cannot feel properly when you're up in your head. Fun fact. I actually trained to be a psychotherapist. I spent three years exploring depth psychotherapy before realizing I did not want to be a therapist, but I did have a perfect skill set for brand strategy. And one of the things that I learned is that when we are up in our heads, dealing with these huge complex problems, it doesn't help us figure out where we want to go. So our top level brain can just get in the way. So I would be sitting with someone and be talking about like these big life things, and I'd ask a question and they wouldn't be able to answer. So they'd say, "I don't know, there's so many options. I feel so overwhelmed. I can't get clear about what I actually really want."

For me, the exact same thing comes up with founders and businesses talking about big brand and business problems. They get completely stuck in the question and all of the options and finding clarity can be really hard. So what you have to do in terms of both therapy and branding is help people get out from under that rigid hyper analytical mode. They need to connect with what they really want. And so to do that, you have to get really, really relaxed. I do full on brand therapy sessions, where I get clients to get super comfy, like lie on the couch across Zoom and close their eyes and do a guided meditation. And then only once they're super, super relaxed, that's when I ask the questions. So I call it visioning. And usually I'll start with some version of, I want you to connect with a future version of reality, where your idea has come into the world in its most perfectly executed, beautiful, impactful, successful way. Now tell me about it.

At the end of the talk, we're going to share a link with some resources, because I want to give you a chance to experience what that looks like in practice. So next week I'll be sending out a recording so that you can experience kind of what I'm talking about for yourself. So this might feel like very, very

advanced-feeling to some of you, but I want to be clear that I am not suggesting you go out and lead guided meditation sessions for all of your clients. But I am suggesting that you spend some time at the beginning of every project trying to connect with that visionary mode. To do that, you're going to have to consciously move into that more creative state, whether you get there through meditation, art, writing, going for a walk, whatever works for you. I want you to experiment with making space for that kind of creative-feeling mode.

The other thing I do at the beginning of any project is just ask the question, how do I want this thing to feel? How do I want people to feel when they experience it? So if you're not already asking that kind of question, try it. One of the best ways I've found to get into this is to ask, if this product or service were a physical shop, what would it be like? What's the vibe? Who's in there? Tell me about it. I find that thinking about digital products in terms of real world spaces can really help tune into that vibe that we want to evoke.

One of the things I want to note is that when we talk about feeling, we're talking more about mood, so in this example, than about emotional state. So something that came up when I was talking with Chimmy about this idea, so she was working on a digital product for high-end hotels. One of the things that I thought when I looked at the prototype was it didn't feel luxe enough. And so that's what I told her. And we came against this kind of conflict because she said she didn't want the customer to feel luxe. She wanted them to feel like they needed to get to the end of the sale, like there was this sense of urgency and desire that she wanted to move people through. But I don't think that those two things are actually in conflict. I think you can evoke a specific emotional response in people while still creating an overall vibe of luxury.

So once you've figured out the dominant feelings that you're going for, you need to find a way to bring that into your work. And one of my favorite ways to do this is with mood boards. So this is the mood board that I created for Path, so that's the project we just shared with you, as part of the branding process. So these were the visuals that for me evoked the sense of, it says they're fresh and friendly, that I wanted to achieve with the rebrand. And I find that when you combine pictures with words, it makes it so much clearer. Like, words can be interpreted so many different ways by different people. But when you bring the two together for me, it gave me something I could share with the founders as well as the designer and keep coming back to myself so that everybody was clear and it guided each thing so that we knew we were coming back to the right feeling.

I also took a mood board workshop with Grace Baldwin recently, who I think is here, and had a major aha moment. Because I've always used mood boards for things like branding projects, but we talked about using them for kind of any project. And so I started doing that. And this is when I put together for my own business for an idea for a signature service. And for me, this completely evokes the feeling that I want people to have throughout that experience. And so even for non-creative decisions, for like business decisions, onboarding, what's happening, I can come back to this and like ask, does this align with that essence that I've kind of put together?

If you're not a visual person, mood boards might not be the best way to go. So you can totally experiment with your senses. You can find the music that evokes the feeling you're going for. You can find physical spaces that match the mood and work from there. You can connect with different characters or celebrities who match the mood. Just find something, play with seeing what can capture that kind of feeling for you. And then when it's time to write or create, you want to think about, or rather feel into, that energy and try to bring it into the thing you're creating. If you're not naturally much of a feeler, you might wonder, okay, how do I know if I'm actually accomplishing this thing? So this is where Chimmy's influence starts to come into play, because she's the one who actually inspired me to start doing this.

You can test for feeling. Share your design and copy with people and use something like user testing or even a simple survey to ask them what words and feelings come to mind when they experience your design. If the words they use align with your intentions, you are on the right track. I actually think that testing is a great idea, even if you're an expert feeler, because it can be so subjective. So you might think something is coming across as cheeky and cute and users experience it as brash and condescending. And so with that hat tip to data and analysis, I'm going to hand things over to Chimmy, who's going to take us fully into the world of thinking and show us how we can make all of these big dreams real.

Chimmy:

All right. So Ange has shared how, as you bring feeling in, you connect to the big ideas, the things that you want to put into the world, your vibes, your mood, your emotions. But I've seen lots of creatives get stuck there. They're overwhelmed. They don't know where to start. They continue to fuss with the thing and miss the window of opportunity to put their idea into the world. That's where thinking comes in. When you're doing something new, when you're doing it for the first time, when you're the only creative person on a team that doesn't care about your creativity, thinking can help to provide clarity around what you're working towards and how to achieve it, especially being able to get things off the ground and done rather than perfect to start.

You also get the benefit of being able to communicate. So when I first started working at British Airways, the design team would go into stakeholder reviews. And there were only two outputs from that stakeholder session. You ended up at the pub, like a bar, or crying. And that's because everyone thinks they can do design. Because of course, it's the thing that you see with your eyes. So by bringing some of this structure, I was able to start communicating design decisions and impact in a more objective and less debatable way. Finally, efficiency and effectiveness. When you ask anyone that I've worked with, particularly engineering, they're like, "We've never met a designer like you," because I ask constantly, "Are you sure we need to do all that work to have any impact at all? I think you should check again." So speed and efficiency in knowing when to put something out, when to iterate, is another thing that you get with thinking.

To do this, there are four questions that I like to ask. And these four questions I ask at the start of every project, and I come back to them as we go through delivery and iteration. First one is, what does success look like? Now, this may seem like, oof, that's a basic question, Chimmy. Why would you need to ask it? Well, have you ever put people from different departments in the same room and ask them what

success looks like? You can discover that you are not on the same page on what problem you're even trying to solve. So asking that question at the beginning means that everybody knows what direction that you're going in and what good looks like when you're successful. I use the Lean UX Canvas to document answers around the business outcomes that we're hoping for. So these might be things like an increase in sales, a reduction in the cost of acquisition, a decrease in bounce rates for a journey or a page.

Then we go into, how will we know that customers are seeing the benefits of this thing that we want for our business? Well, we expect to see some kind of change in their behavior. You want to note down the positive change in behavior that you're expecting from your customer, but also the negative change that you want to avoid. So something like more calls to customer services, for example, is something that you want to say, actively, I want to avoid that. And then finally, a set of metrics. Now, if you take nothing else from anything I tell you today, please get some metrics going. Because metrics will help you measure. It will help you track. It will help you know when you can go into your feelings and feel when it's right.

Next, you want to talk about your ideal customer. Now, I'm obsessed with an ideal customer. Because if you create something for everyone, you will never create something that anyone loves. So I ask successful companies, those that are profitable and have longevity ... God, I can't speak ... usually have clarity around their target customers at every level within the organization. We know this because there are people that really love the product and also people that really hate them. So think Apple versus Android, for example. Very big emotions around those products. Documenting your ideal customer at organization level, product level, and feature or screen level is super important.

For me at Trip Tease, for example, that means that I knew at my interview that the Trip Tease ideal customer profile was an independent hotel group with six to 12 hotels in it. I was like, "Hire me. I love this. You know it already." Then we go into the product level. I work on a specific product and our customer there is a marketer who works for that company and uses the product. But sometimes I may need to create a feature or a screen, and that's for a different kind of customer: the person who buys the product, who's a very different person from the person who uses it. So knowing these kind of things helps us make hard decisions and know when the decision or the trade offs that we're making is the right one.

Thing three is here, is start getting into speed and efficiency. Because you need to ask the question, what do we need to learn first? When you're working with something new, you've never done it before, you're putting something into the world that has never happened before, you're disrupting an industry or yourself, how do you know what you need to do first?

Let me tell you a story. A few months ago, we went on a team building day and we were split into groups to create a spaghetti tower. We got a few sticks of spaghetti, some masking tape, some string, and a marshmallow. And they said, "You have 20 minutes, build a tower as high as you can go. Make sure you put the marshmallow on top of the spaghetti." Oh, designer on the team, we spend a lot of time

planning. We're like, "Yes, let's go. How much support do we need for the base? How can we make sure that we have really nice ability? And then we can start growing." So we started putting our tower up. We looked around. We're doing really well. We think we're going to win, just before the end, we put the marshmallow on top of the spaghetti. What did you think happened? The whole thing fell.

This is a lesson in your riskiest assumption. Your riskiest assumption is the assumption that you've made that if it proves incorrect will completely ruin your product, your feature, your idea, or your business. And that's the thing you need to start with. When I'm working with engineers, sometimes our first testing of our assumption is a small call to action on the page. Register now if you would like to have this feature, because I'm sure as hell not going to build anything if no one is interested in it. Right? So whenever you're creating anything, you've got a list of assumptions that you've made. You need to document them and then you need to assess them and see which of these things is really going to screw me up. If I can learn something quickly about this, then you're going to put something in the world, get some value, make some money as you build the perfect version of whatever you have.

And finally, how will we know when to change? I'm pretty sure that this is something that most people don't actually ask, but it's something that's super important in my process. We have a few companies that really ought to be here, but they're not. Blockbuster didn't pay attention when Netflix showed up. BlackBerry had 11 million cracked berries. I was one of them. I told everyone you would have to pry my BlackBerry Bold 9000 out of my cold, dead hands. And I'm holding an iPhone. So ... In order to disrupt or stop or change in any way, you need to know, as a collective, when to do that. So here we're documenting a few things like, how much churn can you tolerate before it becomes a problem? How far can you deviate from those success metrics that you talked about right at the start? How much effort or budget can you burn up before you need to stop? And then finally, how much negative sentiment is okay?

So if you're a designer or you're me, you'll know that people don't like change. So if you put something out and they don't like it, you need to know how much negativity you can tolerate and for how long. So this has two effects. It prevents people from panicking just because things don't go right immediately. But it also means that you don't fall to the sunk cost fallacy, where you continue to invest more and more time in something, even though rationally you know there's no chance it's actually going to work. That brings us to the end, last couple of moments together. We hope that you've been inspired to think about feeling and feel about thinking differently, that you'll take some of the practices that we've suggested, even the ones that feel unfamiliar and possibly a little uncomfortable, because that's how we learn and develop.

Ange:

And we want to leave you with this. It's totally okay to follow your heart and make space for intuition in your creative work. But then you want to make sure you test it. Because that's what makes what we do different from art. Yes, we get to be very, very creative, but we also have these goals and these outcomes that we need to hit. And by making space-

Chimmy:



People-

Ange:

Pardon me?

Chimmy:

For the people who don't care about your creativity.

Ange:

And people who don't care about your creativity. But when you make space for both the thinking and the feeling, you can do exactly that.

Chimmy:

After the talk yesterday, the podcast one, we put together this resource page.

Ange:

1:00 AM.

Chimmy:

You can click on the QR code and we've put together some of the things that we talked about today to help you. Thank you.

Ange:

Thanks.