

## Ant Lightfoot's 5 Questions Transcript

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Hello. So my name is Ant Lightfoot and I'm an artist and performer. I'm really interested in care and wellbeing and spreading an ethos of radical kindness, and I try and embed that in all of the work that I make.

I'm working with the Come Together project at the moment to think about, think about embedding care in day to day lives, creating a care and wellbeing toolkit, and starting to think more critically about feelings or brains or emotions.

And I'm really excited about enabling people to do those things. I'm also really interested in introvert awareness, in non-verbal communication, and figuring out potentially a new universal way of communicating that might not be verbal without having to learn a brand new language.

So during the pandemic, I actually stayed connected with people largely through Zoom. And as a neurodivergent person who has been struggling to break their way into the art sector, I have to say that everyone going online, having the opportunity to meet people, network, see shows, show my work suddenly became available to me because everyone was online and

at home. So the disabling factors that would normally stop me from, say, going to networking events or going, you know, traveling to a different city to see a show. Suddenly the show came to me in my home. Suddenly the networking came to me in my home.

And so I'm really interested and invested in trying to figure out what it was about being in an online space, what it was about using Zoom specifically and networking online. That really worked for me as a neurodivergent person.

And actually, I think the biggest surprise for me is that, you know, before the pandemic, I wasn't freelance, but I am now and I never thought that would be a reality for me. I really thought that was, you know, a pipe dream that was never actually, you know, due to all the disabling factors and all the pushbacks

I've had over the years and all the difficulties, I thought, you know, maybe this just isn't the space for me. And I've realized that it is, because if you're able to start to advocate for yourself and your own needs, then people can start to cater for them.

And I think that's one of the main things I'm excited about sharing from my experience of this pandemic. What did I miss most during the pandemic? That's a really good question. Um. Definitely some elements of face to face interaction, things like hugging my friends I really missed, but also due to a lot of different factors, I found

myself more and more isolated before the pandemic, so I felt pretty well equipped to deal with the isolation of the pandemic because I was burning out more and more, bringing

myself more and more back to replenishing my energy levels in quiet ways, in introspective ways, quietly isolated.

But I definitely still miss hugging with my friends. I will say that I'm giving them give them smooches. And that physical affection, I think, is the answer to that. And yeah, I think I've mentioned this before, but I really want to hold onto the new ways of working.

I want to hold onto our the opportunity we were given to start to prioritize our own well-being, start to understand the well-being of our collective existence on this planet, and figure out how we can advocate for ourselves better be there for ourselves as well as others.

And opening up the digital space, you know, live streaming events while there's a real life performance happening, maybe you can livestream it for people who couldn't make it or are disabled and unable to come. I think I really want to hold onto this digital element.

This hybrid of real life and digital work has been incredible for me, and I've engaged with so much more work than I had previously, so I really want to hold on to that. Thank you so much.