

CONVERSATION & AFTERNOON TEA WITH SAMINA AZAM

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AFTERNOON TEA

Those of you who know me, will know one of my favourite past times is enjoying afternoon tea.

The artistry, tradition, venue and food but most of all the company. This is my virtual version of having a catch up with a friend over tea & cake.

Enjoy my conversation with

Angela Hsu
Administrative Business
Partner, Google Cloud



WELCOME TO OUR FOURTEENTH EDITION FEATURING - ANGELA HSU

What are you up to at the moment?

It's been four months since I started my new job at Google as Administrative Business Partner in Cloud VMO. Transitioning from my previous role into this one has been eye opening and so much fun. I went from working in independent (non-profit) private schools in Northern California as an EA to working in one of the largest tech companies in the world as an ABP, and remotely, no less! The learning curve has been tremendously steep but also fulfilling. I took a huge leap to leave my previous job because I wanted to see just how far I could stretch. Having fallen into an EA role by accident and previously having a career as a professional violinist and teacher, I am not



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new to starting over. Working under pressure and imposter syndrome are feelings I'm very familiar with. It seems that no matter the job, the same feelings of insecurity mixed with excitement are always there when starting a new role.

To be frank, I think the honeymoon period at Google is over. I've settled into new routines and patterns and feel much more familiar with my role. If I'm at a loss for answers to questions, I know who to ask. I've just realized that for the last couple of weeks, I've been doing the bare minimum in life. You know, when everything runs on autopilot and you go into robot-mode. This has extended to all parts of my life - professional and personal. Even as a parent and partner, I feel like I haven't been very present nor thoughtful. I'm preparing the same meals, asking the same questions, and holding the same conversations. I think it's time to shake things up a bit and step out of my comfort zone in at least one tiny part of my life. Making a tiny change will have a ripple effect, no doubt, into the other parts of my life. Maybe this means just being more present and getting out of my head, because lately, I've been really buried in my thoughts.

Alongside all of this, my daughter is finishing the fourth grade, and I feel like she's really changing and growing up before my own eyes. My partner is a fourth grade teacher (at a different school) and is working so hard to finish the school year strong despite COVID cases on the rise and mountains of reports to



MY BEST LOVED CAKE, TEA, COFFEE OR VENUE?

I love tea, but since I've removed caffeine from my diet, finding my new favorite has taken some time. My current favorite tea is a relatively new discovery: Harney & Sons Decaf Assam tea brewed with a little knob of ginger, a few crushed cardamom pods, a splash of oatmilk, and a bit of honey. Served alongside a gluten free cookie, and I'm a happy person. I'm happiest enjoying my tea and cookie(s) in my backyard or alone on my kitchen floor with my back against the humming refrigerator. If I don't make time for a daily cup of tea, my day feels incomplete. Taking a bit of time to myself along with the ritual of preparing the tea grounds me.

A COUNTRY I WOULD LIKE TO VISIT

Thailand.

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write. In the United States, mass killings continue and those acts of violence and the suffering of the victims' families and loved ones has been weighing heavily on me. I want to hold my little family in my arms and never let them go.

During the day when I'm working, our puppy and I will go in the backyard to take breaks. I watch her. Dogs are constantly present and it's astounding to see how unencumbered they are by "thoughts". Life is constantly new to them and nothing is routine. This is how I want to be.

What are you watching/listening to?

I've been listening to Orchestra Baobab, Ali Farka Toure, Joni Mitchell, Boubacar Traore, Nick Drake, etc.

Your favourite tool/app?

I use Google calendar and email the most, and I waste the most time on Facebook.

Connect with Angela:

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Instagram: angelahsu

HAPPINESS MEANS...

Simplicity.

A LETTER TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF

(I wrote myself a 'lil haiku)

Dear young Angela

Your strength will carry you through

Think less and love more

WHAT ARE YOU READING?

I recently finished listening to the audiobook of Dear Emmie Blue by Lia Louis which was just lovely and thoughtful, and in paperback, I was truly enjoying Call Me By Your Name by Andre Aciman, until our puppy literally chewed the book to pieces. Guess I need a new book recommendation now!

IN THIS MOMENT I FEEL...

...like taking a risk.

Thank you Angela for your friendship. It was a pleasure working with you and even more of a glory growing our connection and bond.

I love this piece. I love your insight and self reflection. Honestly, this is highly powerful and inspiring.

Sometimes life can feel like it's happening to us, that we are not an active part of it. Your words transcend and catch my heart.

We are constantly evolving and challenging our concepts and beliefs. I look forward to continuing our life journey together.