

Joy.

That's what I've been feeling today.

That's what I feel when I'm focused - and in the zone - deeply considering the trade-off considerations of a particularly challenging design problem.

Design as an act of creation - fills the soul with a sense of wonder - and of possibilities.

And for one who spends their creative energy sculpting ideas and concepts - in the design of information systems - the canvas can be writ as large, or as small, as you may wish to focus on - for a moment, an hour, or a day.

With a mere thought - you can zoom in, or out - from the microscopic detail of selecting just the right algorithm or data type - to the macro level concerns of how the design of value chains and information flow will affect the competitive position of an entire enterprise - and well beyond, as it may encompass information exchange and processes that affect relationships with partners, suppliers, and certainly - customers.

There is joy even in considering the selection of the tools and materials with which you will craft a solution - technologies, data structures, conventions, standards - and need to meet the sometimes competing forces/concerns of security, maintainability, simplicity, availability, performance, quality, reliability, and resilience - all while trying to keep at bay those crushing forces of negative energy: complexity & cost.

The most boundless type of joy that can be experienced in such design work - is when presented with a challenge to design that which does not yet exist. To weave the threads of creative energy within your mind - and be responsible for creating something - from nothing - with unfettered freedom to choose the "paints" and "canvas" that will satisfy your own inner muse.

When your design evokes comments from your colleagues, such as "elegant", "crisp", or "rock-solid" - it is the nearest equivalent (and as close as you will likely ever get) to receiving a standing ovation for that recognition of the excellence achieved - in the duty-of-care - that you, as a true artist of design - strives to reach, every day.

Ok...so yes, there are practical limitation and constraints imposed in any such creative endeavors - of time, of budget, of scope, and of resources - that must necessarily intrude into the cerebral composing of such symphonies of thought and ideas...but work with me here...I'm waxing poetic.

There is even a special kind of joy to be found in facing the daunting challenges of introducing foundation-breaking changes into the design of an existing legacy information system.

But that requires a certain kind of personality - that may be rarer still.

Because, let's face it - not everyone is going to be enthusiastic to design the solution when the business proverbially asks you to change the transmission and the tires - while the car is hurtling down the highway at 80 mph.