

You Are Not A Frog

CPD & Reflection Log



Episode 56:

Podcast notes

Why is spending time with very nice people not always good for you? Why does this week's guest stick a picture of a chimp to her computer monitor? And what is the question we should ask ourselves before we say yes to an invitation?

This week's episode is a retrospective on what the first lockdown and subsequent ways of living and working have taught us about the importance of connection.

Joining Rachel is Dr Jo Scrivens. Jo is a portfolio GP and as such, has had to adjust her working practice in a number of settings in recent months. Jo and Rachel discuss the opportunity that lockdown gave us to reflect on a quieter existence, but also how it spotlighted the importance of connection with family and friends, colleagues and community.

We know that loneliness has a hugely negative impact on mental health, equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day according to one study. Conversely, another study has shown that having a really good friend at work can increase your life expectancy by up to 7 years!

With working practices limiting direct contact with other people as part of the COVID crisis, finding ways to connect with your colleagues may need a little inventive thinking. Making a conscious effort to walk past your admin team to say hello, keeping your office door open to encourage passing conversation or booking in a virtual coffee break if you're working from home can offer you opportunities to connect.

Rachel talks about a study that shows how deep connection with colleagues can occur with just 40 seconds of conversation. The key to getting these strong connections is finding common ground, offering feedback, and some self disclosure and vulnerability.

Vulnerability and self disclosure allow us to become more grounded in our relationships with people. It helps us to build our self esteem as we see others are going through tough times too. A good friend at work can really help you see things differently when you are overloaded with stress and your inner chimp is likely to escape - take a listen to understand how Jo uses the chimp metaphor in a very real sense as a flag to her colleagues!

A final thought on connections - they aren't all equal. Our connections with people fall into 4 categories: Very Wise People, Very Important People, Very Nice People and Very Draining People. Your VIPs will energise you, while your VNPs (nice as they are), don't necessarily offer you the same energy back. Make sure you are spending your time with the right balance of people in your life to feel energised.

One way to make sure you're not giving away too much of your time to things that don't energise you is to improve your ability to say no. Jo offers a few tips here, a critical one being; ask yourself, if I say yes to this, what am I saying no to?

Here our top tips on maintaining better connections:

In work:

- Have connection at the forefront of your mind. Change your route, plan a coffee break, keep your door open.
- Don't be afraid to be vulnerable, people will trust you more.

In life:

- Take a look at who your VIPs are and make sure you're spending enough time with them.

Our Stop Start Continue checklist can help you assess how strong your connections are (amongst other things) - you can download your copy of the checklist here.

<https://www.shapestoolkit.com/start-stop-continue-toolkit>

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What three key things have you learned from listening to this podcast?

Is there anything you can use from this podcasts that will help you to help others?

What are you going to do now?
How will you know if this has made a difference?
CPD time claimed:

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