



Episode 104: How to Cope With Nightmare Relatives and Colleagues Without Losing the Plot

with Corrina Gordon-Barnes

Spending time with colleagues and family members that we don't particularly get on with can be hard. We feel restrained when we're with them, and we worry that every conversation might turn into an argument. But there is a different way to manage this conflict and change the way we interact with each other.

Rachel and Corrina talk about ways to make requests of people rather than demand from them. This teaches us to not rely on them to change or make things better and instead look at how we can adjust ourselves to interact with them better. Corrina also discusses other strategies to deal with difficult colleagues and relatives. She emphasises the importance of self-awareness and looking at people with no prejudice.

This workbook will guide you through these steps to help you deal with difficult people better and have a peaceful holiday season.

Podcast links

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Learn more from Corrina in her previous episodes with Rachel:

- [Episode 32: How to take control of your thoughts](#)
- [Episode 89: Should I stay or should I go?](#)

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Quote to Remember:

'You know, I don't think there are any podcast guests that can come on and tell you ever, that you can change someone in the sense that you can't control their behaviour. That's not how human relationships work, we get to stand in our power, we get to make requests, and then we get to choose what we do instead.'

What You Will Learn

We encounter people we don't get along with every once in a while (or sometimes more often!). As much as we may want to avoid the interaction, sometimes we are left with no choice but to deal with the situation. Therefore, it's important that we learn how to work with these people without creating conflict.

Learning to work well with them will help us focus more on our goals and achieve better outcomes. However, this does not mean that we can force them to change for us. We can only work on ourselves and request for them to do the same.

We should be honest about reality and the gaps in our expectations. These expectations are often the reason we get so disappointed and upset when things do not go our way. But we should always be in touch with our reality. This way, it will be easier for us to adjust and make things work for everyone involved. It may be hard to face reality, but it is something that we must do.

This activity will help you reassess your perspectives on people and yourself. You will see that your dislike for some people is often based on prejudice. Hopefully, Rachel and Corrina's discussion and this workbook will help you see them with a fresh set of



eyes. You'll learn that everyone has flaws, and their quirks and pet peeves are part of their humanness.

Activity: Take Time to Reflect

Is there a family member or colleague you dread spending time with? What do you think are the reasons you find them so difficult?

Think of all the things that make you happy and upset. List them down below.

<u>Things that make me happy are:</u>	<u>Things that upset me are:</u>
<u>1.</u>	<u>1.</u>
<u>2.</u>	<u>2.</u>
<u>3.</u>	<u>3.</u>
<u>4.</u>	<u>4.</u>
<u>5.</u>	<u>5.</u>

Rachel mentioned that happiness is equal to reality minus expectations. **Do you agree with her? Why or why not?**



Corrina said that if you cannot change your reality, the best thing to do is change your expectations. It is all about facing your reality and acknowledging the things in your power to change. **Has there ever been a time when you had to do something with absolutely no expectations? What do you think of that experience?**

Write some of the things that you worry about which may happen during a work or family gathering. Then plan in advance, how you might deal with these things

<u>If this happens...</u>	<u>Then I will...</u>

Make a list of all other possible things that could happen over the holiday period and what your reactions would be. Try to be as realistic as possible.



Listing those things above takes a different level of honesty and self-awareness. With this honesty, you can then look at the bigger picture and make adjustments to make the situation better.

We need to have empathy to deal with people better. We have to meet where they are and then make a request.

What is your definition of empathy?

How do you think empathy will help you deal with people better?

Making a request does not guarantee that the person will say yes. It simply means that you are doing what is within your power.

Have you ever requested something from someone and they end up rejecting you? How did you deal with it?

What are your considerations before relenting to a request made by others?



We cannot change people and control their behaviour. Nonetheless, we can behave in ways that can influence them. Likewise, we can make requests and choose what we can do instead.

When we find our zone of power and decide to take control, people may end up not liking it. But when we draw our boundaries, we have to be ready for pushback so that it will be easier for us to deal with it when it happens.

Have you put in a boundary which might get some pushback? How will you deal with this without giving in?

We must acknowledge that not all people are going to be easy to work with. They may prefer doing things their way. Especially in this holiday season, we must learn to meet each other halfway and understand that sometimes, we like to do things that will be easier for us.

Instead of operating with our assumptions and expectations, we need to look at things from a fresh perspective. When we dislike something in someone else, it is likely because we see an element of that in ourselves. However, things do change for the better, and nothing ever stays the way it is.

We should treat people like human beings with the respect and understanding they deserve. Additionally, we should just show up how we want and make sure that we are proud of it. If we can walk away knowing that we did the best we could, then we don't have to live carrying other people's judgments.



Happy Holidays!

CPD time claimed:

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