



## Episode 169 QD: How to Avoid Amygdala Hijack

Humiliation is often used to demand better performance in the workplace. It targets our fear of rejection and our desire to stand out. But instead of positive feedback, our amygdala perceives social conflict as a threat. It causes our survival instincts to kick in, causing people to stress out and potentially shut down.

In this Quick Dip episode, Rachel explores how we can transform our amygdala to focus on thriving towards rewards instead of struggling with our fears. She discusses why we shut down in the face of conflict, how to recognize these moments, and ways to avoid them. You will also gain insight from Dr. David Rock's SCARF model on how to motivate others positively in the workplace.

If you want to develop an uplifting environment where people can perform well at a high level of comfort and positivity, this episode is for you. Learn to strive for happiness even in the face of conflict.

### Podcast links

Check out our [Permission to Thrive CPD membership](#) for doctors!

Learn about the [SCARF Model](#) by David Rock

Join the [Shapes Collective FB group](#).

[Email Rachel](#) or reach her on [LinkedIn](#) or [Twitter](#).



### Quote to remember:

*‘Our brain operates on this overarching principle of avoiding threats and maximizing reward. When people are performing badly, we should focus more on how we can minimize the threat, and how we can increase the reward for them.’*

## What You Will Learn

Our amygdala will forego happiness for survival during a crisis. This can mean the difference between life and death when experiencing dangerous situations. But people fail to realize that our survival instincts kick in even during everyday social interaction. Our fear of not being accepted by others can trigger the amygdala to take over.

In this activity, explore how you handle social conflict. Discover your fears and motivations towards understanding what rewards you should strive towards. Recognizing them means being able to respond appropriately and preventing an amygdala hijack.

Creating an environment where people are motivated through positive interactions is the goal. Treating others with respect and recognizing their fears and desires can foster happiness in the workplace. Learn how to maximize engagement and drive lasting performance with the SCARF model. Understand how status is a common factor in any work environment.



## Activity: Reprogramming Your Amygdala

Q1. Describe a personal experience of an amygdala hijack because of negative social interaction.

Q2. Is the fear of social rejection relevant to you? Explain your answer.

Q3. What are the thoughts and emotions you experience when someone criticizes your performance or gives negative feedback?

Q4. What motivates you to perform well in the workplace?



Q5. Does a person's status effect your response to feedback?

- I. Are you intimidated by people with authority or people who are of a higher rank?
- II. Whose criticism do you handle best? Whose do you handle worst?
- III. How would you prefer your feedback to be handled?

Q6. Who do you measure yourself against? What is important to you when it comes social acceptance?

Q7. Describe ways to improve your social interaction with co-workers or your employees.

*When you are triggered, think about how to minimize the threat from status. Ask yourself these questions the next time you face social conflict.*

1. Am I comparing myself to others?
2. What feelings and thoughts are they potentially feeling?
  - a. Are they feeling inferior to me?
  - b. Are they feeling superior to me?



3. How can I minimize the threat for myself and for them?
4. How can I better myself in the future?

What is the difference between wanting to be better yourself and wanting to be better than others?

What are your key takeaways on the episode?

### CPD time claimed:

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