



Episode 174: What to Do When You Can Never Do Enough as a Working Mum

with Corrina Gordon-Barnes

In today's society, working mothers face numerous challenges as they juggle family life, childcare, and fulfilling careers. This episode features a candid discussion with Karina Gordon, as she shares her experiences and insights into overcoming guilt and shame when it comes to working motherhood. The conversation explores the impact that social media has on self-judgment, the reality of negative emotions, and the importance of self-compassion in managing these difficult situations.

By listening to this episode, you will learn valuable ways to navigate the complexities of motherhood with honesty, empathy, and strategies — tools that can help improve your own work-life balance and overall well-being.

Podcast links

Join our free Masterclass for Leaders in Healthcare on June 20, 2023:
["Know Your Limits, Claim Your No"](#)

Learn 8 ways to set boundaries without stress with our [Just Say No Toolkit](#)

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

Find out more about the [Shapes Toolkit Training](#) programme

[Sign up here](#) for more **free** resources



Quote to remember:

‘The reality is that motherhood can be both wonderful and hard at the same time, and acknowledging this helps us navigate our emotions without shame.’

What You Will Learn

The following activity is designed to help you understand how to manage self-judgment and guilt as you balance work and parenting. By reflecting on Corrina's insights and experiences, you'll learn to identify the origins of negative feelings and explore how to develop self-compassion by reparenting ourselves.

The exercise is a five-step process to help you navigate your emotions — especially shame. It begins by examining your environment and society; Corrina mentioned that societal norms pressure how we live our lives, but they might not necessarily align with our values.

You'll then examine the emotions themselves — which ones do you feel? When do you feel them, and what's happening when they surface? Identifying the causes behind your emotions is crucial to healthily navigating them.

Next, you'll explore strategies for managing the emotions you experience. Self-compassion is a central concept in the episode. We all want to be better parents to our children, but part of that is becoming better parents to ourselves. Reparenting helps us realign our values and principles around shame.

After that, it's beneficial to tackle shame. Shame pushes you to isolate yourself rather than building powerful, healthy connections with other people. But connection helps manage and boost our emotional and mental health.

The final step is a long-running process. Rather than a step, it's a reminder to always be kind to yourself and others. It's a reminder that no one is perfect — not even you — and that it's okay to make mistakes sometimes.



Activity: Five Steps to Self-Compassion

Q1. Spend some time reflecting on your own guilt or shame related to working motherhood. Identify any social norms or expectations that may contribute to your emotions. Do these norms align with your personal values?

Q2. List the negative emotions you experience surrounding motherhood and work-life balance. Explore any patterns or triggers that may surface.

Q3. Consider ways to show compassion and care for yourself as you would for your own child. Identify strategies to develop self-compassion in moments of doubt, guilt, or shame.

Q4. Share your reflections and strategies with a trusted friend, family member, or support group for working mothers. Enabling open and honest conversations can help validate your experiences and provide additional support as you navigate the challenges of balancing work and family life



Q5. Keep in mind that no parent is perfect and it's okay to have moments of struggle. Practice embracing your imperfections and acknowledging that motherhood is a complex and multifaceted journey. Remember to be kind to yourself and that growth and learning come with time.

CPD time claimed:

For more episodes of *You are not a frog*, check out our website www.youarenotafrog.co.uk follow Rachel on Twitter @DrRachelMorris and find out more about the [Permission to Thrive](#) CPD membership for doctors and online and face to face courses on surviving and thriving at work at www.shapestoolkit.com.