

You Are Not A Frog

Workbook, CPD & Reflection Log



Episode 86: Gaslighting and Other Ways We're Abused at Work: What's Really Going On? with Dr James Costello

In this episode of You Are Not A Frog, we discuss the different types of abuse we experience in the workplace with Dr James Costello. James is a psychotherapist and professor at the University of West England. His field of interest lies in relationships at work. As a researcher and author, he has written a book on his field titled *Workplace Wellbeing: A Relational Approach*, which you'll hear more about in this episode.

Dr James readily shares his thoughts on gaslighting, bullying and relational abuse in the workplace. If you're ready to learn about these situations and how you can face them, tune in to the episode and use this workbook for reflection!

Podcast links

- [Sign up](#) for our FREE live webinar where we teach doctors some practical strategies to help with challenging times.
- Check out the [Permission to Thrive CPD membership](#) for doctors!
- [Workplace Wellbeing: A Relational Approach](#) by Dr James Costello
- [Gaslight](#) film
- James' [email](#) and [university page](#)
- [Born Human](#) - a consultancy with Dr James Costello and Andy Chambers
- [Sign up here](#) for more FREE resources.
- [Email Rachel](#) or reach her on [LinkedIn](#) or [Twitter](#).
- Join the [Shapes Collective Facebook group](#).

QUOTE TO REMEMBER:

'All in all, we're not always aware of the impact of our actions as we go about our daily life. I mean, we can't be. But I think what's really important is to be able to talk about the impact that we have on each other in a way that isn't blaming.'

What You Will Learn from the Activity

We all have to work with other people - like it or not! And with collaborative work comes relational dynamics that you have to handle. Sometimes they may be positive — you make friends and find a team you can happily work with. But other times, problems such as bullying and relational abuse can arise.

It's important to be aware of your actions and their impact on others, as well as be honest with yourself about how someone else has affected you. Likewise, identifying and being aware of bullying, abuse and how these can happen may help you avoid both being a perpetrator and a target.

The activity Work Relationship Check-In will give you space to reflect on your experience at work, your workplace and your relationship with your team. Moreover, it will guide you through the steps to deescalate, as well as avoid and move forward from problems like gaslighting, among others.

Activity: Work Relationship Check-In

Abuse in the workplace can happen out in the open or be something that you can barely notice. At times, it may even be considered normal behaviour between colleagues or a person with authority towards a member of a team.

In this situation, there is a **perpetrator** and a **target**. They usually display certain behaviours that are common. Write some of these behaviours down.

Perpetrator	Target

James mentions that we are not always aware of our actions. Looking at these behaviours,, reflect on yourself and identify which role you relate to more. It's possible that you've been described like this by others or you realise that you have behaved in some of these ways..

The **Relational Approach** to a situation includes understanding where someone is coming from. James gives three steps that you can take before escalating a situation to involve performance management. What are these steps and what are some actions you can take?

Step	Actions I can take
1.	
2.	
3.	

Gaslighting is another form of abuse that includes undermining a person’s ability to trust themselves.

Write down a personal experience you may have had with gaslighting and how you handled the situation.

Triangulation is the technique in which you talk to other people about your experience of being gaslighted. Write down three trusted colleagues you could approach if such a situation ever happened to you.

- _____
- _____
- _____

There are **three common factors** in relationships that play a big part in helping you deal with difficult work situations. List down where in your current life situation you can find these three and some actions you can take to foster them and create a safe space in which you can flourish and develop.

Common Factor	Where can I find these?
1. Unconditional positive regard	
2. Empathy	

3. Authenticity	
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Lastly, **check in with yourself**. Respond authentically to what is going on at work right now. If you are currently having a hard time with relationships in the workplace setting, write down what's happening, what you are feeling in response and what you can do to move forward.

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 her online and face to face courses on surviving and thriving at work at www.shapestoolkit.com.