Another topic that we have a lot of people who are thinking about is diversity and inclusion in the workplace and how to create environment for everyone to feel like they belong and they're included. And also when they're recruiting and finding talents, they keep that in mind as well. What are your thoughts in these areas? I think we can all think of a time, like even back in school, maybe the dodgeball team or applying to college where we've been excluded or felt left out. It's so important for us to think about how am I intentionally not creating situations at work where people feel like that feeling, right? Or have experienced that. So inclusion, I'm focusing on inclusion because that's where we each have personal responsibility in the way that we show up. Diversity is a broader thing, right? Comes into the recruiting practices and comes into how companies are thinking on an organizational basis about retention. But each of us have a responsibility to play in creating a work environment that's inclusive based on the way that we show up, the way that we engage with each other, the way that we're really thinking about being supportive. And each individual just wants three things and that's to be valued, to be supported and to be respected. Valued for the contributions that they bring to the table, respected for who they are, all of who they are and supported in the goals that they want for the future. So when we think of inclusion, it really boils down to those three things. How are we showing up in ways where I'm valuing my colleagues, respecting my colleagues, supporting my colleagues. What do I need to be valued, respected and supported? And how's the organization as a whole really sharing that responsibility to create spaces where everyone is experiencing those three things too. That's a really kind of a good summary in terms of having someone feel valued and respected and recognized in an organization. Do you have some specific examples of how an interaction could be felt that way by everyone? When they are valued and respected versus not? I think it's simple things, right? Like pronouncing someone's name correctly, right? Remembering that someone has a kid or a partner asking or they went on vacation asking them how it went, being willing to share those things too. Just remembering things about people, asking people what their goals are, how you can support them. Those are the things, those are the small ways that we can begin to start to shape and redefine a culture that is inclusive. And it also ties back into that energy management piece, right? Because it's all interconnected. It's like, how are people who show up at work showing up more human? And how are we creating that space for those human connections? And with that, deeper relationships form and evolve. You have more trusted relationships, you have more open feedback when it comes time for new ideas to be put forward. You have new ways of looking at problems, people feel more open to share. And often businesses will talk about, teams that are more diverse and more inclusive have better business results. You can't drive better business results without having those trusted relationships, right? Because then again, we're not creating the space for people to really show up and feel like they can share the thing, their different perspectives. And offer the insights that they have that are really valuable for their teams. So. Yeah. So I think kind of giving those in mind when you're interacting with someone and giving their background and interests in mind, as well as thinking about, okay, gathering the opinions from different people.

So let's talk about now the practical ways of building these four hard skills. Mapping your feelings and those of others, matching those feelings, understanding the meaning of them and moving them in real time to achieve outcomes. If this sounds pretty simple or simplistic, I absolutely agree. This is like really simple. But the challenge is, I'll repeat this at the end, but the

challenge is doing this at a really high level of skill in real time on a consistent basis and under stressful conditions. So I have yet to meet someone who meets all those criteria. I am definitely not one of those people. So, you know, doing this work, you should find incredibly humbling because it's really hard to pull that off under stress consistently at home. It's very hard to do all those things, but we try, right? We try to be a little bit better. So here's the first thing to think about. I mentioned this before. How can you ask, how are you to promote those connections, to inspire dialogue? At work for me, when a colleague says, how you doing? If it's not an appropriate time to actually have this conversation, I don't wanna, I call it lying, right? To say, oh, I'm great if it's not the case. But something I sometimes say is like, well, you know, lots is going on, but I'm really pleased to be speaking with you if that's the case. So think about the tone in which you ask this question. Think about how you can ask the question so you get an honest answer. You know, the classically bad question, if you're a parent of a school-aged child, for instance, is how was school today? It's probably, depending on the age, a monosyllabic response, which is, oh, fine. Or if a teenager is like, mm-mm. Ask more specific questions. Did you have music class today? Did you enjoy it? Why was that? You can think of questions like that as a parent or as a teacher. In the workplace, you might wanna say, how did the meeting go? How are you feeling about our progress on this project? And without putting your thumb too heavily on the scale, you might wanna say, yeah, I think some of us are a little frustrated with the pace of change. You? Allow people to have those opinions. I think some of us don't ask because we're worried about the answer. Like, what if someone tells us how they're really feeling? My God, what do I do then? You'll see in a bit, I think I have some good answers to those questions. So think about this. In your next conversation with someone, surprise them and surprise yourself and try to actually ask the question, how are you? Tone matters. I will give you an example, a non-work example. I remember when my youngest child, I think he was eight or nine, pretty tough time in my life. And I was home that day, he comes off the bus and says, daddy, daddy, how are you doing? I said, well, I had a really hard day. So I'm kind of tired and a little sad, but I'm so happy to see you. And I didn't have to tell him why I felt that way. That's the developmentally appropriate response that you want to think about. Now, later when he was older, when he was in, I think he had just graduated college, it was, hey dad, what's going on? And I said, well, lots is going on, let me tell you. And he paused and he said, wow, that's pretty heavy. But it allowed that open dialogue. And we still have that open dialogue and relationship today. So developmentally appropriate in the workplace, you want to be careful of power dynamics. If you're the boss and you ask your team how they're feeling they own the right not to answer you honestly, because you are their boss. That power dynamic, don't mess with that, be really careful. Well, now you've asked, and you kind of got the good lay of the land, what do you do?

Cindy, some of the challenges we hear from emotions community members and users, for example, they have a hard time receiving and giving feedback. I wonder if you have encountered such challenges in your coaching practices and how would you suggest someone to do in this kind of case? Wow, yes, I often run into this in coaching leaders. They want to be more effective at both giving and receiving feedback. And so I think I'll approach my response thinking about a leader, a young man leader that I'm coaching, who we've been working on this together lately. And so giving and receiving feedback is really tricky because we human beings,

the word feedback can trigger us in our, you know, the amygdala and the base of the brain, our survival, we feel threatened, even the word, even before we know if it's positive or negative. And so when I'm triggered and my defenses are up, it's really hard for me to hear. And so the foundational work that I do with clients when we begin coaching helps them kind of manage their nervous system, understand and catch themselves when they're triggered or emotionally hijacked. You know, that's when we're in a habitual pattern of reactivity that somehow our personality thinks will keep us safe in the world. We all experience this. It's easy to tell when you're thinking back on something that happened yesterday or this morning and you think to yourself, oh my gosh, why didn't I say this? Or why didn't I say that? Or I was like a deer in headlights or I came on too strong in my defensiveness. That's a good sign that you were probably triggered. So kind of a baseline skill that I work with my clients to develop. And right now I'm doing that by having them do a six week program with positive intelligence where they learn to, they become more familiar with their defense reactions and are able to then have practices to shift back to themselves or their center where they have access to their sources of intelligence and wisdom and compassion and inspiration and empathy. All that is in a different part of the brain. So that's part of leadership development in the work that I do. So that aside, let's talk more about giving and receiving feedback. There are some useful, sort of a list of useful guidelines I think that help leaders be more effective. So Kim Kim, if I had feedback for you, especially if I thought it would be hard for you to hear it, like it's constructive or negative, I need to make sure my nervous system is settled and I'm in my center, right? And it's good if I ask permission to give you the feedback. Is this a good time? And if not, to schedule a time and so that you can be prepared. And then if you give me permission, yes, please give me the feedback. You're already more open to hearing it than if I just sort of, you know, do a drive by and give you feedback when you're not expecting it, right? Your whole system is going to react and it'll be hard for you to hear. So it's simply asking permission and making sure that you have a good time to give feedback is really helpful. And it's like when I, if I say, well, you know, Kim Kim, why did you do it that way? That word, why, is likely to trigger you and send you into your defense reaction. And it's much more useful to use, to use words like what or how than to use why. Why is seldom useful in giving and receiving feedback. So I center myself, I find a good time, I ask permission, and then I take responsibility for my own thoughts and my own emotions and what I want. And what I mean by that is I use I statements to take responsibility. I don't put it on you. So I describe what happened objectively. So while Kim Kim yesterday in, in the meeting, when I was giving my presentation, you interrupted me like three times. And I, I wondered what, what was going on with you and, and it, I felt confused and it disrupted my flow. And I'm wondering if you were, I found myself wondering if you were trying to make me feel like I made you look bad. You see, I used I statements. I here's what happened objectively. I describe it like anyone would describe it if they were seeing a videotape of what happened, objective description of what it was. And then I take responsibility for what my own experience. And then I can say, and so I'm wondering what was going on with you. You know, this is the impact I think it had, and this is what I'd really like to have you do differently in the future. That is easier for people to hear. And then if I say, well, you were trying to make me look bad in that meeting. And this is immediately the other person's going to be defensive as opposed to saying you interrupted me three times. This is the impact it had on me. This is the impact I think it had on the team, giving the other person a chance to share what was going on for them and then

moving into some sort of solution. Yeah. So that's the model that I often use. And we practice too, which is helpful. Yeah. That's kind of what you were looking for. Yeah. Yeah. I think you mentioned kind of a few things that to summarize, it's present a fact and then how you're feeling with that fact or action of the other person, and then ask questions to understand why someone acts like that instead of assuming the intention. Yes. Right. Because yeah, I think we talked about this recently where my intention is private. And the impact on you is private. My action is public. So whenever the intention and the impact are different, then there's a gap. And the only way to close that gap is to share and to listen. And so that becomes useful in giving and receiving feedback and in fact, in managing conflict. Right. So yeah. Yeah, mm-hmm.

One topic you have seen your leaders and customers that you're working with that are solving is managing changes, especially during the pandemic. There are different kinds of things that we need to handle. Becoming remote work, now becoming back to hybrid work or in-person work and childcare responsibilities and health and all kinds of issues. What are the suggestions that you have for people to handle changes? Yeah, thanks for that powerful question. I just wanna name that COVID has had such a big impact on the world and on us as human beings. We've had to adapt quite a bit and it's been very disruptive on so many levels. So, surveys have shown an increase in the number of adults and children who report symptoms of stress, anxiety, depression, insomnia, so on and so forth, right? So I'd say some suggestions are self-care is number one. Can't overemphasize that. And really just asking for what you need. You know, what is it that you need at this time? I wanna call out William Bridges' work on managing transitions as well. I found that his suggestions on managing transitions can be quite helpful. So he talks about how transitions and changes are in three different zones. One is endings, new beginnings, and in between endings and new beginnings, you have the neutral zone. And I sense that we going through this pandemic right now, we're in this neutral zone, right? Of not quite knowing when the new beginning is gonna start and, you know, so there's all this fogginess about this time and that can create a lot of anxiety for us human beings. So six tips to get through this is, one is to limit other big changes in your life. Two is to allow this emotional experience to unfold. Really just acknowledge, you know, what is it that you're feeling right now? Three is to get creative and do something fun for yourself. You know, this is like a really heavy time. So how can you have a little fun? And fourthly, get some short-term goals. So that you can feel anchored. Fifthly, shift your mindset to one that values this in-between space. And lastly, readjust your expectations about the level of productivity. So that is the six. And I also, you know, I just wanna say, be kind to yourself along the way. You know, we don't have to do everything. And with all these changes, you know, there's some things that we still don't have enough information on. So how can we take good care of ourselves along the way or sitting with this uncertainty?

There is a great recognition going on and there's a lot of talk about burnouts. What suggestions and advice would you have for organizational leaders if they want to attract and retain talents in this time? Well there's some interesting research which shows that what we want most from work are good work relationships. And if you've ever worked in an organization in which there have been negative relationships, it's a very poisonous atmosphere. So a lot that a leader can do can be to build a positive climate where people can care about each other, support each

other, and can be direct with each other. And our book talks about how to do that. The second thing that people want from a job is interesting and exciting work. Well work today is interdependent. Very little work one does by themselves. We need other people for information, for resources, for support. So again we come back to relationships. I need to build a network of relationships of those people who I need to get my job done and they need me to get their job done. So what leaders can do is to build that sort of climate which encourages people to get to know each other on a basis in which they can be direct with each other, can support each other, and can raise difficulties with each other in a way that turns out to be very positive. I would just suggest a leader to do that because being direct and kind of being honest with each other takes actually quite a bit of courage and maybe sometimes like diplomacy as well. Yeah, it does take courage. It takes skills. And we talk in the book about how to do that. But part of it is that we need to see that even raising problems can be done in a way that honors the other person's ability. That it says I think you have the potential to be better, not that you're a bad person. So therefore if I'm committed to your growth and your development, then it's not that I'm zinging you if I'm raising a problem. It's a way to talk about helping you and us improve. And I think what the leader can do is can be support that in his or her own behavior. Are they direct with people? Are they committed to the other people's growth? And also are they willing to hear comments from other people about ways they could become better? Right. Also to make sure that people aren't using this as a way to attack each other or to score points. And the leader can help to set norms to say no, we're committed to each other's growth and each other's performance. Because if we all do well, the organization does well, and it makes life better. Right. So it's important to emphasize that and actually be sincere, not just to say it that I'm committed to your growth or you're committed to each other's growth. And that's why I'm being direct and provide a feedback. Right. Yes. And what we find in organizations that have that sort of culture have more people who want to work there who apply, have higher retention rate, lower turnover, and higher performance because it's a place I want to be, not that I have to be. So we often think that money is the most important thing. It actually ranks about fifth that we pay people in different ways.

organizations are looking to see how they can cultivate an inclusive environment with diversity and inclusion. I mean, it's not just gender and race and other parts, it's also personality. How would you suggest leaders to do that? For example, if they want to cultivate an inclusive environment for introverts or women or other minorities to be growing? Yeah, obviously, super important. Everyone knows a more diverse organization can be much more productive, but a more diverse organization, especially in the beginning, is very challenging because there are so many different perspectives and different styles and so many potential clashes. And so I think that goes back to empathy and listening and being able to hear the other side and make sure all the voices are heard. So I focus on very much women, introverted women in tech. And so part of that comes from the fact, one, I'm an introverted woman and I used to be in tech. But part of that is realizing, especially women in tech, usually outnumbered by men. There are a lot of introverts in tech, but a lot of the leaders are extroverts. And especially in the US, you know, Americans are people raised in the US school system. The extrovert style was always preferred. The ones who raised their hand, who spoke up, you get a class participation grade and then you come to the workforce and you're expected to, you know, I got feedback like, lead out in front,

speak up more, say your opinion. And it's not a natural thing for an introvert. And so I'm just using introverts as an example of differences between people as a leader, recognizing that introverts have a different thinking process than an extrovert. An extrovert, your best answer you're going to get from them is when you ask them the question and you ask them for the answer on the spot. The best answer you're going to get from an introvert is you ask them the question, give them time to think, and they'll come back with their best answer. Now, if you force either of them to switch the way they do it, ask an extrovert, you know, give them extra time or an introvert, tell them to respond on the spot, you're not going to get the best out of your people. So just using that, you know, difference as an example of being aware that people think differently, have different perspectives. So how do you enable them to do their best work? There are night owls, there are, you know, early birds. And so enabling them to optimize the way they think, and then be able to ensure that they are contributing. Introverts will not naturally contribute unless there's something they're super passionate about, or they can do it in a controlled managed way, like writing an email, versus, you know, speaking up in front of a large group. So as an as a leader, recognizing those differences and enabling, you know, doing business in a different way than perhaps your own preference. You know, brainstorming, for example, usually extroverts are the ones who are speaking up this idea, and that idea, and they're full of ideas, because their brain is wired to actually speak and talk at the same time. I mean, speak and think at the same time, an introvert's brain is wired to think first, and then speak. And so just having people write down ideas before we even start talking is an example to get a different kind of thinking process out, or tell people the topic you're going to talk about, you know, before you actually have the session. So I think as a leader, it's just, you know, again, going back to empathy, understanding differences, and enabling that in ways that are not always your preferences. Lesson learned.

So you mentioned an interesting point about a mentor having empathy. Like how do you know if someone has empathy and how do you grow empathy if you want to be someone with empathy? Yeah. First of all, I think it's very, empathy doesn't grow on trees. You know, it's, it's, it's hard. Can you develop empathy over your life? Yes, you can. You actually really asked two questions, Pam, Pam, but sort of how do you know if somebody has empathy? If you're really listening carefully yourself, of course you want a good listener, but if you yourself are listening carefully, you'll realize that the questions that she's asking you are steam customized to who you are or seem customized to what they just heard or seem to reflect the pain that she sees that you're feeling about something. So it's almost embedded in the question is an intonation or a con a connotation that otherwise wouldn't be there. You know, an advisor might not, might not be tailoring the question. A coach probably is going to tailor the question, but the coach is going to be tailoring the question to maximize in your peak performance. An advisor might not, might not, you know, great advisor actually would be empathetic, but so the answer is, you know, not that there's one answer is, is, is sort of feeling that the questions are tailored to you, but not only the, the pan pan of the moment, but also the pan pan of the feeling somehow. So then the question becomes, you know, how can you, you sort of ask, how can you become empathetic or, or work on empathy? I think it's important to be still. I think it's important to listen, really listen. Not just hear the words, but, you know, be listening to the words and listening to the feelings of somebody. It's hard to train empathy, but you know, it does take time and patience. That's great.

Yeah. I think that's one of the kind of important skills that we're hoping to help everyone to cultivate as well. And by the way, I think that's an immensely important question. I know part of the reason you asked it is because you picked up on what I said earlier. I really think, you know, empathy is not a necessary condition for everything, but it tends to be an important trait for leadership. It tends to be an important trait for good communication. You know, I think it helps move the world forward. So I'm glad you asked.

read one of the Forbes interviews that you did and you mentioned like management is one of the things that AI and automation cannot replace. So in the case of kind of someone being a manager and leader, how should they continue to be or learn to be a great manager and leader, not only in the things of thinking about diversity and inclusion, but maybe other aspects to to be the better version of themselves? Yeah, you know, I think there's a lot we can do to get the basics of what it means to be a manager. Like there's a lot of good books out there about, you know, like the manager's path and a good puzzle and things like that, you know, that just teaches to be a good manager, right? You know, and then of course, there's the lived experience of running into a situation and not knowing how to respond to that situation. How in that moment do you figure out how to how to resolve the situation? You've never seen this situation before as a manager. You don't know what to do. No one's ever taught you. Your manager, your own manager can't support you. What do you do? It's a really good question, right? And I think the lived experience of the day to day work that we do as a manager is what teaches us to be a better manager. And the question is, are you doing that alone? Are you doing that through peers that you're working with, you know, reaching out and creating good connections with, you know, peers at your company, or perhaps peers within other companies. There's a lot of great resources online for leadership communities where leaders can learn from other leaders, ask questions, right. And of course, that, you know, there's the opportunity with a coach, if you have an opportunity to work with a coach, where you can literally role play in a work through that scenario with a coach, and work out the best scenario for how to resolve that. And I think that's one of the best reasons why coaching is such a great thing for people in leadership is it can you can really move through ideating how to, you know, how to resolve and address these situations that show up in your work. And, and those situations, I'd say probably like 99% of who I am as a leader is because I some at some point failed in something and then learned how to do it better the next time, right. And I always chose to be the person who was continuously learning and improving my leadership skills. And, and utilizing, you know, my peers around me to help me do that. And, and of course, getting getting coaching and mentorship myself. For me, that's 99% of who I am as a leader. And then maybe the other 1% is what I read in a book or what I saw. So what, what tools or resources do you use to kind of reflect on your learnings from kind of every time you have solved something or couldn't solve something? Yeah, I, for years, I've used this little hack, where I spend about, you know, 510 15 minutes at the end of every day. And I say, What did I learn today? Yeah, well, what didn't you know, so it's like a little mini retro at the end of every day, I just do it in my head, you know, when I started it out, I used to write it down, but now I just had and, and, and so like, then I think, well, what can I do differently tomorrow? Right. And so then I put that into place. And I think that that habit of making those micro changes every day to be better, to do things better every day, has really helped me, you know, grow my leadership skills much faster. That's, that's great. Yeah, to reflect

and kind of think ahead what you can improve and what you have learned. We have built out a software self serve product, but people do do exactly this kind of reflection. So they can review and go back to answers over time. And, and we're looking to generate some insights and trends based on those answers to the reflection to.

Hello, I'm Pianpian, founder and CEO of Emotions. I'm originally from a village in China. The internet changed my life by giving me access to information and contacting professors in the US. So I wanted to do something with the internet to improve other people's lives. I got my master in social science from Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and my master in sociology from Yale. After Yale, I started working in tech as a product manager. I personally struggle with leading teams, building relationships with managers and colleagues early on in my career. And I wanted to build something to help myself and other people in similar needs. In the past 10 years, I worked as a product lead at different tech companies such as Ticketmaster, GoDaddy. From my experience, as well from talking to hundreds of customers and users and leaders, I learned that there are no good solutions for people to learn how to be better leaders and managers and how to interact better as a team, especially for people who are first-time managers and leaders as well as cross-functional teams. There are existing solutions such as one-on-one coaching and corporate training. However, they're expensive. They're not accessible for most people. And also, they're not providing continuous support. Even the passive content library, people still feel like they take one class and then they forget about what they learned. There's so much information out there, but people don't know where to find the relevant one for themselves. What we want to provide is something that people can have access to 24-7, and they can build habits from using our reflection practices, our videos made with world-class experts, as well as insights based on data. And we also want to provide them with immediate feedback so that they can continuously improve as a leader as well as improving how to interact with each other as a team. If they want more human touch, we also have to coach the next person they can talk to. But with our software product, they can continuously help themselves and coach themselves. And organizations can be transformed by learning these new habits and becoming higher performing teams and developing more effective next generation leaders. Long term, we want to provide something that's an upscaling platform and integrating with people's flow of work so they can access our product from Slack, Zoom, and continuously build different kind of capabilities and skills necessary for them to be successful in professional and also personal life.

which is emotional intelligence is an important skill. It's not the most important thing in the world, but it's really helpful. And we know that people who take Mesquite, they score higher in that. Here are the outcomes. They engage in more pro-social helping behavior. They can handle stress better. They're more empathetic, they're better at handling conflict. I love the last one in the work environment. It's, as managers, they're able to help their teams accomplish things a little bit better, but it's how they do that. An inelegant way of saying it is, they're just not jerks about getting things done, right? You can be a decent human being and still be a productive person and get people on the same path. So again, a real brief overview of where this stuff comes from, what the model is, how we measure it and why it's important. So with that, think about this. How many times a day does someone say, hey, how you doing? How are you? And

I'd say probably for me, a couple of dozen times, but that how are you question is usually not a question. So what do you usually say? Hey, how you doing? For those of you who are parents of school-aged children, how was school today? What's an answer that you typically get? I think these are fairly common. Oh, it was fine. How you doing? Oh, I'm okay. What does that mean? What data have you shared? And we'd say the answer is, you tell me, do you know anything about that person? And I would say, no. Now there are some cultural differences. So in the United States, you get a lot of awesomes, but even when someone says they're awesome, it's kind of meaningless. And if you think about this, for many years, I'd ask people about a typical day. Last three or four years, when I've asked about a typical day, people can't answer, because it's like, well, I don't have one. So if you think about a week or a month or a year in your life, your lives are filled with emotions. And that means every single person you meet in the workplace, every leader, every employee, every customer, if you're a parent, every child, if you're a child, every parent, if you're a human being, every friend, every person you meet has a rich, inner, complex, emotional life. From the moment you wake up to the moment you go to sleep, your lives are filled with emotions. From like the little general hassles of daily life, like, I didn't get a great sleep last night, or it was cold today, so, to the huge systemic issues facing our world. So when you say in answer to the, hey, how you doing question, if you say fine, it's meaningless, it's meaningless. We are emotional beings, for better, not for worse, for better. So we have emotions, but why they get in our way at the same time. Why do we have anger? Why do we have anxiety? Why do we have hatred? Why do we have disgust? Why do we have envy? It messes up our lives, but why do we have compassion, and gratitude, and appreciation, and love? Because it makes us who we are, and you can't trade one for the other. We are living rich, emotional lives. So one of the takeaways from today should be, well, try this one. Maybe surprise someone when they say, how you doing? Don't say fine. Maybe consider giving them a real answer, whatever that might be. You may be pleasantly surprised at how an honest dialogue like that can really enhance your relationships. As long as it's developmentally appropriate.

talking about the careers and the stakes and the roles for multiple people, tens, twenties, a hundred people in your organization, you want to be able to come in prepared and confident and have the right level of expertise. As it relates to the individuals on your team, then that is very much a priority, especially right now with what is happening with the great resignation. Retention is a really big deal and people will leave organizations not as much because the job wasn't right or the pay wasn't what they want, but one of the number one reasons is because of management or poor management as the case might be. So really showing up and being present and holding those one-on-ones and having those career development discussions and really advocating and supporting your individual team members' growths and having a growth plan, career development plan, having a plan, actually having a plan and a process for doing that is those are the ones where you're going to have loyal team members that will follow you and will essentially be fully engaged in the work that they're doing. I can't tell you how many conversations I have with mid-level and higher level managers who are leaving their organization or leaving, they want to leave their job largely because of, you know, in their words, dysfunctional leadership or unsupportive or disengaged or non-existent management. So it's really key to be able to have that, prioritize that, which can be really hard. I get it. Like there's a

lot of priorities for a lot of companies. Their directors and leaders and managers aren't just responsible for the leading and directing and managing. They're also responsible for a whole set of deliverables and commitments, their own self as well. So I don't underestimate how challenging that is from a balancing act, but knowing that prioritizing the individual development of your team members is so critical because retention is very real, especially right now. Right. How does that work when somebody wants to promotion that the company or the organization wouldn't be able to afford to provide a promotion right now? Or if somebody's in interest in a particular working on a project that they think is exciting, but there are people who need to work on some projects that might be less like new projects. So how would you suggest as an individual to think about that and also as their managers to think about these things? It's a great question. And I actually did an entire two-part workshop for a team in an organization in Seattle in the healthcare industry on this topic. And so in essence, my guidance to them was to think about the word of growth from a career standpoint in a broader definition than just a promotion. And so that's a very real situation, especially with smaller or mid-sized organizations is that they just don't have a lot of positions open, even if they have these rockstar A-list team members on the team. And so if you're looking for a career development and career growth, then really thinking about that growth from a broader standpoint than just getting a promotion. So such as, can I develop this new skill? Do I want to develop this new competency, these set of responsibilities? And so thinking about expanding your skill set as a way of growing and also being proactive in the process. And perhaps I'll say being advocating for yourself versus waiting for your manager to just find you a great role. That's a huge part of the process, is this really coming from this place of self-advocacy? What can I do? And so there may be a level of being patient, but if you're continuing to advocate for yourself, then when that position does open up, that you would likely be one of the first people in line, particularly if you've developed the skills. And so that kind of goes both ways, both from a management, an individual contributor looking for growth, as well as the manager. From a management standpoint, there's a broader perspective too. So yes, it's encouraging your team members, having a process, encouraging them to come up with a plan, but it's also encouraging them to come up with a plan versus just relying on you to like give them a promotion that usually doesn't land so well in a manager's eyes. But there may also be a process of letting go. And what I mean by that is if you have an A-list rockstar player on your team that is so capable of more, and your organization just doesn't have the opportunity, and that person is very, very driven in their own professional career, they may end up moving to a different division, or they may end up leaving the company and going to another position. And so instead of trying to control it and keep that person in their role or pacify them with some promises that you may or may not be able to deliver on, that you are supporting them in their growth, even if that means that they end up leaving the company. And that can be a really, really tough message, but it's really supporting that person's growth to the best that you have ability to do so. I've talked to leaders who have actually created positions in the organization and have gone to bat for their A-list players because they know how valuable they are to the organization. So essentially it's looking at a lot of creative, different kinds of solutions to keep your top talent on your team.

How would you suggest that someone could get the most benefit out of the book besides reading it? Like you mentioned before to do the deep, deepen your learning, use that. Yeah, I

think it's using the material. You know, as I said, what our ideal notion is, you read a chapter and then you try to apply it and you read a chapter again, and then you read the next chapter and do the same thing. And what you'll do is you'll start to build on this. You'll start to say, you know, one chapter will speak to you more than another will at this point in time, but maybe at a later time you'd want to come back. We see the book as often as a resource book that we would urge you to keep it in your bookshelf and pull it down. If you're in a conflict situation, you may want to raise, look at the chapters that deal with that and say, okay, I'm going to work on that. So again, I think it's not just knowing it, but using it and using it with relationships where your commitment is to deepen the relationship, not necessarily to drive it to exceptional, but to drive it from casual to more important or from more important to really quite close. And I think if you share with the other person of saying, hey, you know, I really value what we have, but I think we could have something more. And I realize that I haven't always been as forthright as I want to be. And I'm now being committed to being more forthright because I think that's going to help our relationship. And that's what I'm committed to. Right, so stating the intention of wanting to deepen the relationship with the other person and then what I would do in order to help achieve that as part of the relationship.

And you also mentioned earlier in terms of giving feedback to help people grow. I have heard from some new managers that giving feedback and helping people grow, helping people set goals, it's actually quite difficult. And how do you combine the individual passion with the company's goal, team's goal? What kind of thoughts or suggestions you have on this? Yeah, so I think it's important, you talk about the company goals and your own personal goals to really understand where the convergence is there. I think, particularly millennials and even Gen Z now are looking at companies and entities that they have shared values and shared alignment on vision. And if they don't agree with what that company is doing, then they're not gonna work there, which I think is incredibly important because you live and breathe work, unfortunately. Hopefully you do have a life outside, but we spend a lot of hours working. So that shared alignment on kind of mission and values is very important. And related to that then is what are the company goals? What are, where is the company going? And do you believe in that vision? Now, can you work at a company you don't believe in their goals? Of course you can. But again, you become much more robotic than passionate and you're probably not bringing your best work to it. So understanding what are the company goals, what is your role within those company goals? And if you don't understand that, then work with your leader to help understand how you fit in. And if your leader doesn't know, then perhaps there's opportunity to shift and change your role so that it's better aligned to the company. Again, aligned with your leader and perhaps your leader's leader. So that's the company side, but what about the personal side? What's important to you? So there's certainly things from a career side that you wanna grow in leadership or you wanna get experience if you've had business to business experience and you wanna do business to consumer experience or have that kind of experience. Then there's kind of the functional things you wanna learn or functional experiences. There's certainly importantly, we talked about the people engagement experiences that you want to grow in. And then there's a personal passion points. And sometimes those personal passion points match what the company's doing and sometimes they don't. So if I were interested in ballet and I work at a tech company, maybe there's a project I could work on for the San Francisco ballet. Very small

likelihood, but maybe, right? Is one example where those two could overlap. But if not, if I don't have those opportunities to bring in my personal passion, then how am I making sure I'm doing that on the outside world? And if you can't find that balance of, connecting what you want to grow in, what you wanna develop, within an organization and culture that you believe in the values, then maybe that's not the right place for you. And so assessing what is the company, what do I want and how do those two things intercept? I think the challenge with a lot of people who start a new role or in a new company feel like the role that they've been given is this, it's this box. And the most powerful thing is to recognize, no, it's not that box. Usually companies want you to change and evolve and to use your brain to make that better. And so just give yourself permission to do that, follow kind of whatever procedures you need to do in alignment with your leader. But there's probably more opportunity to push your role into things that you like to do than you think there are, because people just get constrained by boxes. And yet there's great companies and great leaders kind of push against that. That's true. Yeah, that's very much true. Growth is something that a lot of people want to have in their life and how do you create a condition for yourself and the other people, it's very important.

Here's another slightly counterintuitive thing for you to think about. I hope with all these things that you'll actually be able to leave with one or two behaviors that you'll try. Here's a great one, I like this one. So I talked about validating, right? So we would say validate, but then investigate. So some of you will come to this thinking, oh, it's about trusting your gut. I would say that that's a bad idea. Trust your analyzed gut. And here's why. So bear with me on this. We have feelings, feelings are physical sensations. We feel a certain way. I've got that knot in my stomach. This doesn't feel right, something's going on here. Well, before you act on that feeling, investigate it. Because feelings come from two general sources. Background moods, like have you ever been in a quote unquote bad mood? Well, that is not something to act on. That's something to manage away, they're messy. It'll mess you up as well. But the feeling, the physical feelings can also come from an emotion, an event. Remember emotions are data. Something happened. I think about projects, project meetings, hiring in the workplace. I don't have a good feeling about this candidate. Well, before you act on that feeling, analyze it. Where did it come from? What percentage of that quote unquote bad feeling is due to the fact that you want a crummy mood? You just didn't sleep well last night. What percent of that feeling is due to the fact of what this individual said? Let's look at my notes. And where does that come from? And how do you do this? Just ask yourself, how would somebody else have reacted? Am I reasonable? Am I accurate? Have I made the correct assumptions? Do I know the other person's intent or am I just in a bad mood today? I gave this example before, but it was so powerful for me. I think about two weeks ago, I was in a really, we'll say, yeah, a bad mood. Let's use that very generic term. I was a little snippy with people. I was like, oh, come on, you know, guys, you know, just my emails weren't as emotionally intelligent as they should be. This happened for a couple of days, wasn't sleeping well. So day three, I'm making my morning coffee, and I just pause for a moment. And I look at the coffee, because for me, I have like a half a scoop of caffeinated and two and a half of decaf, and I have a mug of coffee. So there's a little caffeine in there. For the last two and a half days or two or three days, what I had done is not looked at the bags of coffee. I was having fully caffeinated mug of coffee, and I'm not used to that. I was wired. I mean, I was like highly caffeinated and I don't do caffeine very well. And I just realized, oh my

God, you know, so it was not an emotion, it was a mood. And I felt like I needed to recall two and a half days of emails and conversations and apologize to people. But on the other hand, I was really relieved and realized it wasn't me. I mean, it was me, but it was, caffeine is a powerful stimulant.

What do you think are critical factors for companies, especially startups, to be successful in both the down economy as well as a booming economy? Well, there's lots of correlates, obviously, of success. Many of that, I do think that it's kind of important also to keep in mind here, we need to also think about, well, what does success mean in terms of what's out there for research? Most of what success means is either that the business survives longer or more typically, that it actually makes more money. But lots of startups can be successful in the sense that they allow the entrepreneurs to have a good life and have control of their schedule and other types of non-monetary rewards that I think still are valuable. There's much less research, however, on what types of factors lead to more success on those dimensions. Some of the things that lead to success are things that might matter to an investor, but from an entrepreneur's point of view are maybe not so helpful because there's something that are hard to change. So, for example, we know that more educated founders are more successful on the average, founders that have more experience are more successful, but that's kind of hard to change at the last minute. There are other things though that I think entrepreneurs can learn from. I mean, one is obviously that a lot of success in business is about having kind of favorable unit economics. So, delivering more value than it actually costs you to produce a good or service. And that's something that is particularly valuable actually during down periods, because it means that you probably don't need to look as much for external financing. There's also some interesting research that looks at things like how some business models actually seem to be more likely to be successful than others. So, businesses that are based on like a freemium model or subscription actually have higher average success rates than those, for example, that are based on expecting advertising revenue. And that's likely to be, I think, even more true in a downturn in the economy, because that's when a lot of times advertisers might be pulling back dollars. But if you're providing a service that your customers want, it probably won't have as large an effect on subscription revenues. So, that's kind of just some general ideas, but happy to go in more depth on anything. Thank you. You mentioned a little bit that kind of in a down economy, if a company is kind of generating value or revenue, it's able to survive that economy more. Can you elaborate more on that? Like what, especially what kind of product or services? Yeah, so, I mean, I think the key challenge in a time like today, when the kind of financing environment is difficult. I mean, there's a lot of venture capital firms that have capital, but they don't really seem to be deploying it right now. So, if you're a founder, that's not very helpful. But if you've got a product that at least, is covering its marginal costs, then you have some more options, right? You may be able to come up with a strategy where by growing very slowly, you can reduce your spending and perhaps work, fund yourself based on just internal cashflow so that you don't need external financing. And so businesses that don't have large upfront development costs, or businesses where you can incrementally, kind of add to say the service, like you start with a core service and then only build out additional pieces of that core service. Once you've reached profitability on the core service, are in much stronger positions during this type of economy because they can operate without those dollars coming in from external sources. That's a good point. Yeah, thank you for

elaborating more on that. And then, we know after every recession, there's also booming economy. Then in that kind of period, is there any difference on the factors that contribute to the success of the company? Well, obviously there's less pressure and during a growing economy, then it's much easier to sort of borrow or get external financing so that you can do the advertising or other promotion necessary to grow faster. I mean, if you look historically, a lot of the strongest companies, even in the longterm are ones that got started, kind of got their product or service develop during a down period. So then they were really well situated to expand their customer base when the economy actually improved. And so I think that that's, in that sense, founders who are starting a company right now should not be discouraged. In some ways, it can be a good time to start a company so that you're well situated to really benefit from the next wave of growth. That's very helpful.

Lauren, can you tell us a little bit more about like, what is self coaching and why that is important? Yeah, I have some slides that I thought I'd shared that I thought would be helpful for context. So really, there's three main areas in our life that tends to impact us that tend to impact us the most. So our work, our relationships with others, and then our self care. So Gomathi, you were saying this, right? It's like we have work and we have kids. I mean, all of you were saying, right, we have work and we have kids. And then there's our self, like, do we actually feel nourished? And as are we pouring from an empty cup, and essentially, in each of these areas, we really just want two things, which is a certain level of external achievement. But also, what's the point of that if we're not feeling fulfilled if we don't feel good about it. And so I find for myself and others, we find we tend to find ourselves in one of four places. So first, either we have low achievement and low fulfillment. So for me, I had some lost years after college, I wasn't quite sure what I wanted to do. So I wasn't really achieving a lot and wasn't feeling that good about it. Then I ended up in law school, I was at Stanford Law School, had an offer to work at a law firm. So you could say I was achieving a lot. But I wasn't very fulfilled. That was not a good fit for me. And a lot of us find ourselves in careers that we're not very happy, right? It's a lot of effort and energy to show up to work each day. Before I'd even put myself here when I found coaching, I'm teaching at Stanford Business School, which I loved, but I had so much anxiety, so much imposter syndrome that I couldn't really relax and enjoy it. So that's that bucket. Then there's high fulfillment, but low achievement. So this is when I found coaching. I'm like, this is great, but I hadn't really built up my work and my practice yet. Often we find ourselves here when we switch careers or we're trying something new. Before I moved to the fourth bucket, we also can do this in our relationships, right? It's like you're not in a relationship or not fulfilled or a relationship that looks good but doesn't feel that good. Or self-care routine where you're like up at five and pushing hard, but you don't feel that nourished. Or the sweet spot is high achievement and high fulfillment. So I love my work and I'm achieving so much. Same with my romantic relationships or family, my self-care, all the things I'm doing, I'm doing a lot and it's also nourishing and life-giving to me. So that is the ideal, but I found for myself for a long time and most people that I work with, we're not in that bucket. So I'm curious to hear from you all, where would you say you, are you looking for more achievement or fulfillment and in what areas? Does work feel fulfilling or? Sounds like I'm guessing self-care for a lot of you, maybe isn't where you'd like it or pian pian, I'd be curious to hear from you. I would like to go for high achievement and high fulfillment if it's possible. In all of them. Anyone else? Kind of an area where that

stands out to you? And say high fulfillment sounds great. Yeah. And it's funny, that's that often suffers, you know, it's like I work with a lot of men and women who have these careers that look so good on the outside and they're like, I'm not fulfilled, right? I'm anxious. I have imposter syndrome or it's not, it's not work that I love when I was in law that wasn't just, that wasn't for me. So how can we move to that top? Right. So essentially our outer world reflects our inner worlds. So first, if we think about our emotions, if I'm feeling afraid or anxious, I'm going to make very different decisions than if I'm feeling bold and empowered. If I'm thinking I can't do, I can't take time for myself or I shouldn't do this, or I'm not good enough. Again I'll make different choices or I won't show up as powerful and confident. Or if again, if my body's in a state of stress, again, all of that's impacting how I, how we show up. So ideally self-coaching is noticing when your thoughts or emotions are limiting and depleting you, and then moving yourself to a place that's more nourishing and fueling. So when you're in fear, how do you get to calm or courage or confidence? When I'm thinking I can't do this or I shouldn't, how do I get to, I can do this, I'm capable. This is, this is in my best interest. So obviously you can have a coach that you hire to, to, to work with and do this. But my goal for people, I'm always happy to work with folks one-on-one and, and group workshops, but my goal is to give you these tools for yourself so that you can intercept yourself in these moments and put yourself on a different path. Because generally we're okay, but we're not really next leveling ourselves in what we're really capable of. I know back, you know, 10 years ago, I never would have thought I could have had a Ted Talk with that many views or have a career that I love this much and work with the clients that I work with. It was only when I started thinking differently and working with my emotions differently, was I able to start changing my reality. So I'll stop there for now. Any follow-ups to that around self-coaching? So what are, what are the ways that someone can actually do self-coaching and what are the tools people can coach themselves? Yeah, I'll say two things. So first, so I coach clients. I also work with my family a lot. I like using my mother as an example, but she had a job. She was pretty unhappy and unfulfilled, but she kept thinking, oh, I'm too old now. I'm too old to get another job. Or she would think, oh, other people are more qualified than I am. And then she also had a third belief. I'm not good at interviews. She felt like she would ramble and she, you know, she'd go for 20 minutes and get really nervous. So for years she was in this job that she was pretty unhappy with. It was pretty depleting. And so first working with her, with her emotion, with her thoughts, right? So normally we notice when we're not feeling good about something. So notice your emotions and then ask yourself, okay, well, what are the thoughts associated with these emotions? And so the thoughts could be, so she's like, okay, I'm not feeling good. I'm unfulfilled. My thoughts are, I'm too old. I'm not qualified enough and I'm not good at interviews. So then we go through each one. It's a practice reflective inquiry where we really start to work with each thought. Well, is it really true that she's too old? Right? Well, there's lots of other people in their sixties and seventies that get new jobs. The leaders of our country, right? Have been in their seventies. Clearly they're not too old. She could also look at it as she has 20 years of experience in fundraising. So there's, so flipping those around, then saying there's other people that are more qualified. So if you looked at her background, she's fundraised from really amazing people. She has a lot of credibility. So I got her thinking, you know, who's more qualified than I am. And then lastly, interviews, maybe we don't have a skill or strength yet, but then the question rather is I'm not, or I can't is how could I, right? So for her, how could I become better at interviews? So she has a daughter who's a coach. So we work together. I

really coached her to be really compelling in her interviews. Fast forward six months. She, she got a new job. She went through 10 rounds of interviews to get it. She's much happier achieving a lot more, but it was never her capability, right? For years, she stayed in that place. It was only when she was able to acknowledge, I'm not feeling good. I want to change, notice the thoughts that were blocking her because we have a desire, but then we have a block. So we really have to work with that block. And then once we're able to do that, we can start making different choices and showing up differently. So she had me, but the goal is okay for yourself. How can you notice those moments, catch yourself and then start asking yourself those questions.

how would you ask somebody so they would actually tell you about their values and what they care about? Yeah, so first of all, you need to show that you care. People can see through you. If you're not being authentic, people can smell it a mile away. So first you have to take a genuine interest in your employees to show that you care about their personal life and their professional life and also to share about yourself. I see oftentimes leaders will shut down. They won't share something personal or they won't share how they're feeling and what happens is it creates a barrier. And so I say to leaders, you know, show some humility and some and being vulnerable and being open, which is really hard to do because if I'm the boss, I have all the answers. And really one of the things I find that's almost liberating is when I tell leaders, you can't possibly have all the answers. You don't have all the answers and think about it when you have hired all these wonderfully talented people. Think of the knowledge that they have because a leader really what they do is they leverage strengths and therefore the weaknesses become less important because you're focusing on what you're good at and where and also a leader needs to be visionary. You know, it's really important to have their own vision and to be passionate. So I'm not saying that every leader has to be charismatic and extroverted, but I'm saying that you need to be able to communicate in moving ways so that people can see where they're headed and then to invite them into the conversation because I see a lot of times when decisions are made on behalf of others, you feel left out and not disrespected and it's not intentional, but I think sometimes an executive or a leadership team may think, oh, we're so, we're all smart, therefore we're going to execute rather than inviting stakeholders to the table. And when I say stakeholders, I mean anybody who touches the business, anybody who, you know, like, you know, we've heard this thing about NASA when they're interviewing, why is NASA a great place to work? And when they ask a janitor, what do you do? He says, I send people to the moon. You know, that's the kind of employee we want, right? So I really feel that if a leader can connect and listen, be humble and invite everybody to the conversation, can really go a long way into reaching their goals.

Curious, like would you be able to summarize like a few tools that you think that are most helpful and in most cases, and then what are kind of daily practices you mentioned practice is important. What are the kind of daily practices you recommend that people can build up the muscles of the soft skills that when a stressful situation comes or anger or sadness trigger sedation comes, we're already kind of at our best to regulate our emotions? Yeah, let me take the second question first because it's an important one, which is sort of what can we do? What practices can we engage in to gain experience and to gain expertise in this domain? It's a really important question. And I think for many people in our culture, I mean, we don't come, most of

us don't come pre-programmed with a full understanding of our emotions, right? That just doesn't happen. So for many people, they are just sort of figuring out who they are as an emotional being as they move, not only through childhood into adolescence, but through adulthood, right? So a lot of people are, you know, lifelong project here, figuring out what our emotion triggers are, what are the things that are difficult for us? You know, what are the situations that are most productive for us? What are the situations that are really horrible for us? So it's a lifelong learning process. And I think for many people who haven't had a chance to think about some of these things that we're talking about today, their emotions do feel a little bit more like stuff that's happening from the outside in, just sort of happens. And they feel out of control. They don't really appreciate the connections between their thinking and their emotional responses. I'm simplifying, of course, people have some idea about this but I think on a practical basis, people don't have a ready understanding of this. What that means is that for a lot of people, they go through a day, blow up at somebody, come home upset, yell at somebody else in their home, and then sort of don't know what to do about all of it. So they may have a drink or, you know, disengage or something like that. Now, again, it's a cartoon, but I think that is kind of where most people are. And I think what we're talking about today is a way of developing even a simple framework for thinking, hey, emotions play out over time. There are ways that I can intervene to change them. By practicing, I can get better. I can make some distinctions between different things that I can do to regulate my emotions. Some are gonna work better, some are not gonna work as well for me. And by noticing, first of all, one's emotions, just that, noticing your emotions as you move through the day, that's a huge win right there because I think people feel buffeted by them. They're not even aware that their thinking changes and their patterns of interaction change because they're in an emotional state. So I think win number one is just notice your emotions. Then as you are attending to your emotions, either in retrospect, so you sort of, in your night, at the night, you sort of can think, what happened today? You can think, yeah, I was really happy about this good thing that happened at work, and then I got super stressed out about this. And then you can reflect in your mind's eye after it had happened, like, is there any other way that I could have handled that? And I think by reflecting, you can, by simulation, sort of try out, well, what if I had not said that? Okay, that probably would have gone better. Or what if I had really focused on the fact that he was trying to help me, even though that was really, I thought, a sexist comment of his? Now, I'm not gonna forgive the sexism, but I am gonna at least notice the intent was positive. So there's something there that's positive to work with, so that'd be rethinking. So for me, it's notice your emotions, either in retrospect or in real time, and then give some thought to the strategies you might have used. And what I think we're doing as we build expertise is by noticing emotions repeatedly and trying out different strategies, either in imagination or in reality, we're building our repertoire and we're building our experience of what works. So I think it's this gradual process. And I think the real win here is not just noticing emotions, trying out different things imaginatively, but trying them out in real life, seeing if they work. And then when you get really good at this, you can actually anticipate. We do this in other parts of life, right? For those of us who've had young kids, they're hot in the morning, they can't imagine that they're gonna be cold later. But we, as parents, know that they need to take warm clothing because they're going on a school outing and they're gonna be freezing. So in a similar sense, we can do that for ourselves and our loved ones by sort of gaining some wisdom about what the emotional trajectory of our day or week or month is gonna be. And slowly, as we

gain an expertise, we can then anticipate and then start to use some of those situational strategies that are very, very powerful. By sculpting our lives in a way that leads us to have opportunities to have the kinds of emotions we wanna have and not the ones we don't.

I hear quite often from sometimes community members that like, what would you actually do if you're in contact or talking to colleagues and colleagues might be disagreeing with you and they might be talking over you? How would you suggest somebody to handle conflicts properly and handle interpersonal dynamics? Yeah, that can come up and that's incredibly frustrating. If there is, oftentimes what will happen is that there will be one person in the team or in the room who is really pushing back and really causing conflict and really debating and essentially being a roadblock. And that's incredibly frustrating. What doesn't work is to try to duke it out with that person in a meeting room or even on a video with multiple people. That is a recipe for disaster, as I'm sure that you may know. And so certainly identifying the specific people and setting up a separate meeting with that one person to really uncover and get beyond where's the conflict coming from. And so that's what I call those moments, those discussions, the courageous conversations. Because you may need to suspend the need to be right and just come in with a very open mind and a sense of curiosity to understand why that person is pushing back. And sometimes it's because they're threatened, because they have competing priorities. There could be a variety of different reasons, but creating a place where you're coming into the conversation with a desire to gain collaboration and trust, that is where you can have someone feel like there's a conversation where they can actually disclose what it is. Because there's always a reason. There's always a reason. You just may not hear the real reason in a big forum with a lot of people, because people want to preserve their level of credibility or significance or reputation or any of those kinds of things. But if it's a pattern of behavior that is derailing the progress on a team, then really determining how you can get to that person and how you can have a real honest one-on-one. If that fails and is unsuccessful, then it can be a case for escalating and really trying to remove the roadblocks. But there's a skill there and the ability to really have that conversation to understand what's underneath the roadblock or the pushing back. And then you can solve for what really is the problem versus the outward behavior that you're seeing in the meeting. Right. Yeah. I like what you mentioned in terms of making clear the goal is to gain trust and collaboration, and then taking the time to talk through things with people one-on-one instead of always seeing in a group meeting. That's right. If you have the trust and you know how to build the trust, you can still agree to disagree. You can still have different approaches. You can have different communication styles. But there's a foundation of trust and mutual respect that will still allow you to get through issues and hurdles and setbacks and all of that kind of stuff. And so sometimes that's a real skill in being... There's the confidence that comes back again as well, is being able to have that kind of a conversation and not get emotionally triggered your own self, which sometimes is a real skill.

So we have heard a few kind of challenges from engineering leaders. One is to how to keep team members engaged and motivated. It said, especially when the economy is not going well, the stocks of the company might be kind of significantly down. What are the ways that you would advise and coach an engineering leader facing this challenge? Well, I think engineers or people in general want to work for companies that they trust and they feel valued. And so one of

the best ways I think when things are down, because things go up, things are great sometimes and sometimes they're down. That's the natural evolution of business. But I think one of the biggest things we can do in those down times is focus even more on being transparent, telling the truth to our teams, being clear about where we are as an organization. When we have to make hard decisions, let's say we have to lay some people off, it's like having those transparent conversations with our people as to why we had to do that and why it's important for the health of the long-term health of the organization to do these kind of things. And so I think transparency and continuing to build trust within our companies is incredibly important. And so that can look a lot of different ways. It could be ensuring that you show up to your one-on-ones with your teams and have transparent conversations with those teams, answer the questions that they need answered, making sure they're getting what they need to do their job effectively, breaking down barriers that might be preventing them from getting the support they need to do their job. So it's just like being a good corporate citizen as a manager and a leader to make sure that the people are taken care of. Because at the end of the day, we're able to deliver on the goals of our organization because of the people that are in that organization. Right. And those people are the people that make that product happen. And so, you know, the more that we can take care of those people and ensure that they get what they need and they get their questions answered and that they feel that they can trust the organization.

Is there last minute kind of wisdom or tips you would like to share with the audience? I think the final thing I would share is when somebody says to you, I can't. What we say in class is can't refers to a physical impossibility. I can't jump out of a three-story window and lift. Most of what they're talking about is a choice. When a person says, oh, I can't say that to the boss, no, that's a choice. Oh, I can't be vulnerable, that's a choice. Now, you may not want to make that choice, but we urge students to say, I choose not to. And that may be wise. I choose not at this time in this situation. But when we say I can't, we make ourselves helpless. And I want us to feel more empowered. It's all a choice. Whatever you do is a choice. And be thoughtful about your choice, but take the responsibility of owning that it is your choice. So it's our choice to choose to be vulnerable or to accept someone's feedback or not accept someone's feedback. Yeah. And what if there's someone keeps saying, like, I don't agree with your feedback? Then to say, that's your choice, because feedback is information. They choose. You see, what I'd want to say is I'd want to say that's information. It's your choice about whether to use it or not. I can't force them to use it. But I can make the choice of giving it. Right. And if they say, oh, I can't do anything about it. I would say, well, I'm hearing you choose. You don't want to. And that's OK, because you may have bigger fish to fry. But you're making a choice. Right. That's true. Yeah, I think kind of for everyone to be listening to this, I think you have to make the choice to invest in time and energy to develop and to be more to be more interpersonally effective. So we really thank Dr. Raffer for sharing with us the wisdom from the book and also from the multiple years of teaching the course. And also thanks to the audience for joining. It's very helpful.

someone near to a management and leadership, someone who just got promoted from an IC to management and leadership, think related to what you're saying is sometimes it's a little bit harder for them to figure out how do I let go of what I was doing as an IC and I delegate and now become a manager and leader. Do you have any thoughts in that area? Oh, sure, sure. So

that was my career. When I think about it, I became a supervisor at the age of 25 and I was supervising people that were much older than I was and it was really intimidating and I was unsure of myself and I realized that I needed to learn and develop, self-develop. I couldn't just think that my smarts, my intelligence was gonna get me further because what I've seen and maybe you've seen it too is that when we promote people, we tend to promote people for their technical expertise. Right. And what happens is, yes, I was very smart in finance. That's why I got promoted, I was smart but how did I relate to people? And because if you don't have those soft skills and you don't develop those soft skills and you don't learn hard skills that are more management focused, if I just concentrated on accounting and I learned all the greatest, greatest accounting things, I wouldn't know how to lead people. So the first thing I had to get over was that I wasn't gonna be the smartest in the room technically because what I had to do was develop my team. So I was learning the softer managerial skills and my team was learning the finance, the accounting, the budget, those technical skills. And it was my job to give them the resources and time so that they could technically really be experts in their field. So that to me was really an aha moment that it was no longer about me. It wasn't about the awards I got or the recognition I got. It was about how do I make my team shine? How do they, you know, to elevate them? And so then when I became a middle level manager, I was managing first line supervisors and then I became a third line manager and a fifth line manager and a sixth line manager. So as I was moving up, I realized that I didn't need to know it all and I really needed to count on everybody else. So therefore building your team and that's where the communication comes in. How effective of a communicator was I? Was I clearly communicating the priorities of the company? Was I communicating my vision? And also did I have a strategic plan? Because you can say to people, this is where we're headed, but if you don't have it on paper and you're not tracking it and you're not putting resources behind it, you know, I always say to people, tell me what's important to you and I'll know it when I look at your calendar. Meaning, who are you talking to? What are you doing? What are you focusing on? Because really it takes that leader who trusts their team. You have to have trust to give them that autonomy. We talk about all the time empowerment, right? We talk about engagement. Those are not magical words. These are real concrete things. They're not that touchy feely fluffy stuff. This is stuff that if we don't do as leaders, we're gonna lose people's motivation, their intrinsic motivation, their engagement, and they'll leave. They'll go somewhere else. And so many people leave their bosses. You know, when you look at management studies, you know, it's a high amount, like 60% of people when asked, why do they leave? It's because of their boss. So if that doesn't tell you that we have work that we need to do, and that's kind of why I became a leadership coach as well. Because working one-on-one with an executive can really help them discover new things about themselves. So I don't know if I answered your question, but I know that in the higher you get up to the, you know, up the corporate ladder, the more those softer skills, those relationship skills, and being, you know, humble and vulnerable is really important because, and a great listener, because together when you listen and you can put the pieces together, and all of a sudden you've aligned everybody's strength, it can really be powerful.

and our students, our children, our employees are realizing that you're not being honest with me. And that is corrosive to a relationship. Other stuff doesn't work. And I know everyone knows this, but it's important just to say, in addition to suppression, just like blaming yourself like, oh,

I'm such a terrible, that's not helpful. Or blaming others, you know, avoidance, denial, wishful thinking, oh, it'll be better tomorrow. The sun will come out tomorrow. We all, look, we all do this. I do a lot of these things, but they're not helpful. So what is? If suppression doesn't work, these things don't work, these are common things we engage in. You wanna reduce these and increase these other strategies. The first ones are things you all know. Again, none of this should be news. The question is, how do you actually do these things? So this is a list of some of the longer term strategies. And what the diagram's supposed to show is the following, which is the more you do these things, the more likely you are to reduce your set point, which means the more hassles it takes to set you off. You know, so if you've ever yelled at someone, well, I was lost of sleep, I haven't been exercising, I haven't been engaged in my prayer, mindful, I'm not doing these things, so I'm more easily set off. Okay. The more you do these things, the more, I guess the more patience you have is one way to look at it. So how do you, how do you create routines that allow you to do these things? The answers can be really hard. I've done a lot of work in healthcare, and I always tell people, I don't do what you do, and I couldn't do what you do for more than like five minutes and then I'd be burnt out. But in those sessions, we ask people to talk to colleagues. What do you do right now? I had, before I started doing that, I had one person say, hey, I get up at 4 a.m. to get to the hospital to do rounds. You want me to get up at three in the morning so I could like get on my treadmill? So that's a pretty humbling experience. And so I do understand that we all have, boundaries and limitations. But if you can do some of this, little bits and just start, it's really helpful. The last point is so important that relationships are probably the single best, social relationships are the single best because they're stress reducer. They make us stress strong. And so I've always suggested, when we hear the phrase, be socially distant, that's a really bad idea. To be physically distant, different story, but don't be socially distant. How do you maintain the connections you have? How do you maintain your relationships? How do you develop new ones? How do you nurture those relationships? If you have a friend you haven't talked to in a while, contact that individual. The friends are, they're priceless. And that friend probably needs you as well. You're not imposing. Having said all this, time is a limited commodity. It's probably better to get that extra hour of sleep than doing other things. But do not fear, right? There's other things that we can do. The next few pages are about things that you can do that don't take a ton of time. And here are a few. Prepare, what could happen? Again, this is the employee feedback. It's like, oh, he shouldn't be surprised. Oh gosh, what if he is? Let me take 10 seconds and just, okay, if he really just pushes back, what am I gonna do? So let me not be surprised. Self-talk. Okay, everything's gonna be fine. Everything's good. I know what I'm doing. That reassuring inner voice of yours. The key is to do it to yourself. Don't talk out loud as you're walking down the street. Modify the situation. I had have a client. We would meet. The only time that we could meet was 4 p.m. on a Friday. And I had the client, and I had the first meeting. It was okay, but we're kind of mailing it in. Toward the end of the second one, I just asked, I just said, should we continue meeting at this time? And people just stopped and said, oh no, it's really terrible. So it was like, I think I forgot. I think we meet Fridays at noon or something. It's like any other time and any other day than last meeting on a Friday. Modify your mood. This is a really critical one because we're in front of groups and people all the time. And I remind myself of this a lot, which is I may not be quote unquote in the mood for something, but I have to be on, on stage sometimes literally and things like that. I'm not gonna suppress how I feel, but I can modify my

mood. I can psych myself up. Even sitting up straight, how I put my lights on, that just psych yourself up, express a different mood. Reappraisal is key. I think that most of us act like jerks at times, but very few of us are jerks. And I always think about this. If someone says something to me or does something that I just like, that wasn't kind. And anytime, I don't actually say this even in my head anymore. I used to say, what a jerk. I don't do that anymore. I always just think, I wonder what's going on in his life. I know my life is complicated. That to that person, I have no idea what's going on. I barely know what's going on with me. Cut them a break. Intervening moment, take a pause. I take my glasses off, huh, interesting. Take a breath. It just gives me like two seconds. If you've gotten an email that you responded to and realize, oh, shouldn't have hit send, hit reply, delete the name, type in response, go back a minute later or the end of the day. I guarantee 100% of the time, you'll change it and you'll feel so much more emotionally intelligent. And then all the physiological techniques of a deep breath, of inhaling, standing. At one point I had a headset and I'd walk around. I don't do that anymore. These things don't take time, they're in the moment. Now that's you, that's internal to you. We talked about validation, but now you have this opportunity to do really cool things with others. And this happens on multiple levels. You're working with someone, you're talking to someone. Again, a teenager has come to mind now. Not in your head, eye contact. Eye contact, putting your phone away. That's a tough one. Showing interest, paraphrase. So you're saying, even though you signed up for that class, you're really not enjoying it, is that what you're? Yeah, you don't have to agree. It's not, you're not agreeing. Paraphrase, like, yeah, that's what I'm saying. Hypothesize, instead of saying, you're so angry. It sounds like you're really frustrated because of, is that right? Because sometimes we're going to get it wrong. And the person might say, oh, is that what I sounded like? No, no, no, I was just so distracted. I got this email before, this text from my friend, and no, mom or dad, or I'm not. Or sometimes, yeah, I am kind of frustrated. But don't you find it annoying when someone tells you how you're feeling? Don't do it, don't do it. That's the validation. That's the validate their perspective. Can I feel that way? The worry is you're validating, like, oh my gosh, now what do I do? I'm here to help, okay? Is there something I can do to support you? What are you trying to do? Is there something that I can help with? Look, sometimes people do want problem solving, but as you know, sometimes they just, am I there for you? Can I trust you? Are you the parent that I can go to when I have an issue? Are you the boss that I can actually feel comfortable talking to? Apologizing is a, we can do an entire course of how to apologize. I do it a lot when I mess up, but it has to be meaningful, it has to be real. Just don't do it, you'll make it worse. And the last idea is shared experience. As a parent, as long as it's developmentally appropriate, yeah, high school was a great experience. I'm not gonna tell you exactly what went on, but no, it was hard. So I think I understand if you're struggling. As an employer, it's, yeah, guys, if I haven't been emotionally present for you, it's not because of work, I have some other things going on.

When you mentioned practice, is that practice hypothetical scenarios or practice in real life? Well, it's usually a real situation and coaching is a very safe place. Everything that happens in coaching is confidential and so it's a safe place to say, okay, well, I know the situation and I can be that person and you can practice giving me the feedback and then we can debrief how that went. So a lot of it is just to have the leader be a little more comfortable and notice their own reactivity and their own hijacking and come back from that and their intention. So when your

intention is really help someone, then your effectiveness goes up. If your intention is have someone feel bad because they made you feel bad, then you both are triggered and it's just going to escalate and become a bigger conflict. So the intention is really key and important here, not just react in the moment, but giving in mind that I'm giving feedback because I want to help the person to improve. So again, it's like, here's what happened. I felt this, I thought this, I am curious about this, I want this. I mean, it's taking responsibility for your own thoughts and feelings and not really using language that blames the other person. That's a really good point.

I think one of the characteristics you mentioned as exceptional relationship is kind of being vulnerable and or maybe a different word that being able to be yourself and say to be vulnerable. Yeah and we have a question from the audience sometimes it's actually hard for for people to be vulnerable. How would you how would you help ourselves and also encourage other people to be more vulnerable? I heard that that's actually one of the things that maybe like leaders are encouraged to do in this day and age. Well real vulnerability is always hard. Being you know being a little open may not be hard. So my telling you a little something about myself isn't hard but really being vulnerable is hard. I want to own that and I want to talk about two definitions of vulnerability and to do that I'll tell you about what we do in class. We put that word on the board and we have students say what do you associate to that and there's usual the usual stuff of weakness, scared, frail, inadequate and then somebody says strong, courage and I want you to see vulnerability as a sign of courage, strength. That I'm strong enough that I can let you know something about myself that I may not feel very proud about or very good about. That I'm really worried about coming through on this project. That I'm really scared about whether we could deliver. It's a form of vulnerability but I'm strong enough that I can share that because you know that I'm going to work damn hard to come through. So can we see vulnerability as a sign of strength? Now in terms of leaders there's some interesting research that there is two other types of vulnerability. One is sharing something that makes me seem very incompetent. So when I taught the leadership class at Stanford I said to students if at the first day of class I said I don't know anything about leadership but I've been assigned this course you would trample me as you rushed out of the room. That would say I'm not competent to be here. But another form of vulnerability is my humanness. So let me tell you a story. I was consulting to a fortune 500 company. The CEO had taken over about eight years previously from his father who founded the company. And his father previous week had passed away and all the executive team and other people had been at the funeral. And this was the first meeting of the executive team after the funeral. And Bill the CEO said I won't tell you how I feel. Obviously I feel very sad about my father's death but I also feel this tremendous weight because of what he has built and the pressure I feel to not only perform as well but to build it even further. And I'm worried about coming through and I'm going to need you but that's where I am now. And you could feel the team coalesce around him because what he did was shared his humanness. He didn't say I'm inadequate here. He said I'm concerned. I feel this pressure. And so often of so another example one time I was starting teaching this class and my son was sick and I was pretty distracted. So starting the class I realized how distracted I was and I said I got to tell you I'm pretty distracted now. My son is sick. He's going to be well but I'm worried about it. I'm really going to try to be present today but it's going to be an effort. And in essence it may be human and the class in a sense can feel some empathy for me sympathy. And not only that but sharing

it allowed me to be even more present. So I think that there are ways we can become now I didn't want people to pity me or feel sad for me. They didn't have to but they could see that as a father I had some real concern for my son. That's my humanness. And I think if we can become vulnerable about things to make us human and if we think of a work situation we can say I'm really worried about meeting this deadline. I'm really concerned about whether we can solve this problem. I'm really afraid we might lose our customer. I'm really concerned with conflict in my team that I'm having to work on. That's telling you where I am. And if leaders want members to be vulnerable remember members are going to model themselves after the leader. So if you have to present a heroic image that you have everything worked out members will do the same thing. And you won't get to know them as people and they don't get to know you as a person.

What are the most common challenges you have heard from coaching your leaders and clients in the past two decades? Well, there are several themes, whether I'm coaching women or men, young people or experienced leaders. There's so much on people's plates. And so sort of managing that and keeping some sort of balance and being able to feel successful, as opposed to that the light at the end of the tunnel is always an oncoming train. And so stress management, balance, interpersonal communication skills, or communication skills, that's a funny faux pas, being able to give and receive feedback without taking it personally, being able to hold a difficult conversation in a way that's going to get the desired outcomes and results, managing my own nervous system as a leader so that I can be a non-anxious presence in an otherwise anxious environment. And the stress and anxiety doesn't go away. So how can I be more effective in that and actually use that stress to sort of power myself in the best possible sense of the word power and create conditions for my team such that people hold themselves accountable and so that they can bring their best to the table and that therefore everyone is better off and the results are better? Yeah. Yeah, those are challenges that I've heard from other emotions users and customers, community members. I think stress management is particularly important now with the pandemic continues and with the virtual environment.

about, I would say, 100 people on my team. And then at Oracle, I had over 6,000 people reporting to me. Wow. Yeah. And so among the people on your team, I assume some of them are first-time managers or managers of first-time managers. What have you found that first-time managers need to learn? What kind of pitfalls have you seen for themselves? And then if you're managing or leading first-time managers, how would you help them to learn how to be a good manager? Well, the first thing is a manager is in charge of recruiting the right people, secondly, putting the right people in the right jobs, and then setting goals, and then holding people accountable for achieving those goals, if you think about that sequentially. And so the first-time manager is probably often hire the wrong people. And they just learn that through trial and error because they don't have a clear idea of what the qualifications are, how to do it. And so if a senior executive can help the middle management learn how to hire and how to evaluate people early on, that probably you can increase the success rate of hiring from 50% to 90%. That's phenomenal. You can do that. And then once you've hired the people, you have to make sure they're in the right position. So for instance, let's say you hire someone and they don't work out, you have to fire them. That's your fault. You as the manager's fault. You either hired the wrong person or you gave them the wrong responsibility. So what could you learn from that? Why did

you do that? And so doing lessons learned, every time you fire someone, a manager should say, where did I screw up? Why did I hire that person? Why did I put them in a position where they failed? And what can I learn from that so I don't do it again? And these are hard things to teach. A lot of it just comes from trying and failing and then doing it a little better next time. Right. Yeah, that's a little bit hard because we do have quite a number of new managers and in the audience. So the key is figure out how to hire the right people, like learn from experience, but every time have self-reflections, learn to figure out what are the lessons, why something didn't work out as intended. Exactly, I think from my point of view, what a first-time manager might say is, you hire someone, they don't work out, you fire them and you say, well, they were just incompetent. And well, that may be true, but why did you hire them? You were incompetent to hire them and put them in that position of responsibility. So don't blame them, it's your fault as the manager. And so you don't wanna do that twice. So what went wrong? Did you not interview them properly? Did you not check their references thoroughly? Did you not match their skills to the area's responsibility? Did you not understand what the job requirements were, maybe because it's a job you haven't done personally? So as an example, when I had, let's say I had a team of eight people reporting to me and someone leaves, one technique that I really liked was rather than replace that person right away, I would not replace that person. And I would have that person's direct reports report directly to me. So even though for a while I might have 15 direct reports because I have my direct reports and I have that one gap and there's people two levels down reporting to me, I would learn a lot about what that job was in that organization. And so then when I hired someone, I knew a lot better what were the requirements of that job because I had been doing that job for three months, let's say, because I was essentially managing one level down. Wow, okay. Yeah, that's a very good strategy. It's like kind of putting your time and effort to learn about a job and figure out like maybe the better hire. The first time, if I can add another comment, which is let's say you're an individual contributor and you're promoted to managing for the first time and now you're managing a team of three people, treat the job of manager seriously. The same if you're an engineer or if you're a marketer or a finance person, whatever it is, as good as you need to be in engineering and marketing and finance, you need to be that good in leadership. And so there's a ton of stuff online, videos and books, you can read about it. The best way to do it is to find someone in your organization who you personally think is a great leader and just spend time with them and ask them how they do it. And maybe meet with them once a month and say, I'm having a challenge with one of these people that I'm working with on my team, they're not performing well, I'm here, I'm struggling with it. And the senior leaders are generally very eager to help and willing to help. Yeah, yeah, that's really a good point, thank you. Learn from the support network and future. Emotions is also a platform to help everyone to learn the important skills, such as leadership skills, communication skills. So it's also providing a channel for everyone to practice with the community or learn from leaders like yourself. I probably could have used emotions a few years ago when I was learning myself. You're too modest.

to get people aligned with you, make sure that you're first aligned on your values, right? You want to have a long-term alignment, make sure that you are viewing things the same way because ultimately if you're not aligned on your values, different things are going to be important, right? So I never stop saying this, so life is all about priorities. What's a priority to you

and what drives your priorities, right? Values drive our priorities, right? What's important to us, right, is what we value, right? So our values is what we value, right? So I want to, I know this is does not sound very profound, but this is the very core of it, it's easy to overlook, right? I mean most people are like, oh I don't want to go through the, you know, values exercise, I mean that's not really that important. Well, okay, that's great, but then when you're making a decision, do you know what's important to you and why you're making this decision, right? So I know that that all of a sudden stops people in their tracks and be like, oh I don't know why I'm making this. Okay, well then, you know, take a moment and think what's important, right? And if you want to get aligned with another person, well then make sure that those values are very much in alignment, right? Or at least in the same type of category, right? You know, so for example, you know, fulfillment and enjoyment, right? So seems to be the same thing, but dig deeper, what does that actually mean, right? Like what does fulfillment mean and what does enjoyment mean, right? So I mean, sound very similar, right? But in reality, I mean, enjoyment can be, um, somebody working extremely hard on something that they're extremely passionate about, right? And fulfillment, for example, may be a, um, having a, you know, big, um, picture, um, view on things, like anything can be fulfilling, right? So one is very specific, like I'm going to drive this down, right? And fulfillment may be, you know, for somebody walking around, you know, on the street and enjoying the surroundings, right? Or vice versa. I mean, these things can be very, very interchangeable, actually, you know, fulfillment could be, you know, very much of somebody who's working extremely hard, but on something that they love and they don't love, right? So, you know, I mean, I think, you know, I think, you know, I think, you know, on something that they love, and they don't even notice that that's, um, you know, taking away all this time, because that's the time that they thought, you know, see as valuable. But maybe somebody thinks of enjoyment as, you know, a day on, you know, the beach, and then the work life balance, which, you know, I mean, like different things bring joy, so make sure you understand what is it that drives this value, right? So you're on the same page, even though the value sounds very similar, different things drive it. So don't just stop at the surface level of the value, right? So understand what is the core on each, you know what I mean? Like, what how did this value come about? Now, of course, you know, that's an alignment also with the, you know, mission and vision. I mean, like, what are you on the mission to do? Like, what's your big vision? Like, what's the end result? Right? What are you? What are your expectations? Like, get aligned on the expectations, because one is expecting this, and the other one expecting that, and these things are not in alignment, right, then these two things, you know, are probably not going to work well together. For example, with team members, right? Make sure that you understand how your expectations are on the same page, right? And if there is a disagreement, and by the way, I want to make sure there's a distinction between disagreement, right, and a misalignment. Now, misalignment is a very global type of perspective, right? It allows for an opportunity to get realigned, you know, or rethink, you know, how and what, you know what I mean, together collectively, right? Disagreement is usually personal, right? It's driven by a personal standpoint, and the need to prove yourself right. So I would like for you to have maybe sometimes a misalignment, I would prefer for you to have a misalignment, right? Because that's, that's workable, right? Like, you can, you can get aligned, if there's, you know, a disconnect, right in there. So you can most definitely work on getting this connected. But if you have a disagreement, right, and if they that's the root cause of the misalignment is the disagreement,

and the ego is involved, right, then you got to put that ego aside, and understand that there's a misalignment. And I mean, of course, not all misalignments work out, right? Sometimes you just misalign on the vision, or misalign on the values, and that's, that's the end. But in disagreement, you know, when the ego is involved, that needs to be something that's separated out of the conversation, right? So your conversations should not be driven by your need to prove that you're right. So or to prove that you're worthy, or to prove that your point of view really matters, right? And it does know inherently, that your point of view matters, right? Know that at your core, this is where you know, again, that alignment with yourself is so hugely important. And sense of self is hugely important. But I feel like, you know, the disagreement, you know, needs to not come or not to be driven by your ego's need to prove its existence. Anyway, trust is going to be huge, make sure that trust is is there, right? And trust is developed through actions, right? Is through consistent actions, right? Trust is not a once, you know, day thing, right? It's an evolution of actions, right? And for one, knowing how trust is evolved, right? Whereas boundaries, know the other person's boundaries and respect that. I mean, that's huge. Understand, you know, where it's okay, right? Like it's, I think everybody should understand, first and foremost, their own boundaries, but then understand and respect the other person's boundaries. So that respect, you know, is going to be one of the key elements in developing good relationships, right? And a good alignment. Now, communication, like whether it's styles of communication, right? I mean, you have to respect different people have different ways of communicating, but understand the cadence of communication, right? So communication has to be open, right? But also respectful, right? Open communication doesn't mean that you get an opportunity to insult whoever you want, right? At any time, right? And tell them what you think. Put the communication in a constructive way where you are a relaying your point of view, respecting the other person's point of view, and opening discussion for a buy-in, right? So communication is not a one-sided element. Communication is always a two-way track, and you got to meet yourself. It's like a tango, right? You have to get in sync. So very important. And I mean, I think Ego already mentioned, but I mean, I think these are like some of the key elements of that. I mean, we can certainly, you know, make this a separate topic, you know, for another time, but I feel like that's, you know, these are the key things that are important in alignment. Yes. So discussing values, see if there's any kind of like, even the words that people use might be different, see if there's any commonalities there, and then figure out like, okay, if there's disagreement, is it because of the Ego or more fundamental value kind of disagreement? And then like discuss the mission and vision. It could be like people have different views on the mission and vision, but maybe through discussions, communication, you can come kind of bring something together, like bring everyone's idea and make something that works for everyone. And then the trust that takes time and like through different iterations, but hopefully that the trust can be built up over time and then be aligned in some way. Consistent action, right? Consistent action where you come through with the promises that you've made, right? It's trust is, you know, of course, developed also, you know, through clear communication with respect, you know what I mean? Where you respect the other person and their boundaries and their personal needs, right? I think that's huge, right? So I'm seeing this, you know, very often these days is that that is not there, but it's simply because people, A, don't know what their boundaries are. They're not good at communicating their boundaries, but also the other party is not understanding where those boundaries are. So this communication has to be, you know, one of

the key elements of that is where you come together in an open conversation, right? With respect, you know, for the other person, right? Just the respect for another human being, right? You know, trust is developed, but respect, you can respect anybody and their opinion, and even if you don't agree, right? So respect is where ego steps aside. Yeah, that's great. I love to emphasize on the respect part. I mean, these are like some of the key elements that like we might not always be thinking about, like, because when people have goals or agenda, and like people are so focused on like reaching those goals, and sometimes like forget about the human side of things, including myself sometimes would do that, and kind of like, it's good to always think about these important parts that we might not be thinking about.

Paria, can you do me a favour? It'd probably save so much time. Sure, of course. What would you like me to do? I'm just on the ACON website. Could you go through it and just basically create a summary of each section with their headings? I need to share it with them later. Sure, I'm on it. There you go, Mike. As promised. Brilliant, thank you. Paria, did you check the spelling on this? I did. What did I miss? You misspelled ACON. OK, that's just one word.

So, Tidia, you talk about some of the good practices as a manager, how to think about growth for your team and carve out time to talk about their career growth, checking with them how they're doing in the weekend or just how they're doing in general. I think that's very great. What other tips do you have for new managers, especially who just got newly promoted and they were in an individual contributor role? Now they have to, well, one of the challenges now they need to start managing their formerly peers. And how would you suggest that they kind of transition the relationship in a way that is effective for both them and their team? That's a really good question. I think a lot of people are dealing with that. And when I've worked with people in that scenario, there's a lot of emotions going on. There's a, oh my gosh, am I competent to manage them? Am I, do I have more information than all of them? What are they going to think of me now that I've been placed as the boss? How do I live up to these standards? And it's all pretty normal and it's pretty normal to have imposter syndrome. And I think a lot of new managers have the expectation that they need to know everything. They need to have all the answers and they better prove that they're better than their former peers. I think this is a pretty common mistake. One of the mentors that I had has always told me that the mark of a really good manager is that you hire people who are smarter than yourself. Hire people who are different than you, who are better than you and a whole bunch of different areas and facets. And that can just be something that's really hard for a brand new manager to remember. So I wanted to kind of leave that thought in people's heads. What I would do in terms of openness and vulnerability is even to have a really good sense about why you were promoted to that role and what your particular strengths are. It may be that you were really good at coding or a certain vertical of technical and that's great. Then your style of managing can first be really mentorship, whether that's doing code reviews or design reviews and helping show leadership and management through the work. I think that's the really good first path of it. A second archetype that I've seen is that people sometimes get promoted because they have really great soft skills, whether it's building relationships with the peers around them, whether it's taking on the role of a technical lead and helping other people with their work. So another really good area of mentorship and management is not in the technical work itself, but in helping the team see a

more elevated view, see the context of how their work fits into the other projects that you might have more visibility in, see how they can cultivate and build better relationships with peers or leadership because you're not doing the work anymore. You're maybe at a different level where you have a little bit more of a bird's eye view. So some of the job is like providing that context and helping guide the team. So those are two different tips for how to really add value as a mentor.

What are the lessons you have learned from your career of leading teams and Working on all these great companies. Well integrity is Doesn't just happen naturally. I think it's a lot like a garden You know if you if you let your garden go and don't do anything to it It's going to turn into a bunch of weeds If you tend it pay attention to it. In other words you act with intentionality You can have a beautiful garden and reap quite a bit from it You know so companies that don't you know, they they don't think about integrity. I Certainly have talked to a number of leaders who are They think of themselves as having integrity they will say that they're high integrity Then when you start asking them, well, what do you do to create an environment of integrity at your company? What specifically and That stumps them a little bit. You know, they well, they've got a code of conduct, right? well, but the code of conduct is something that their law firm wrote them and sent them and They send it around to everybody who checks a box and says they read it But in reality probably didn't and no one ever then sees the code of conduct again, right? In other words, it's it's something that That doesn't actually get any attention. It's assumed No one really talks about it. And what I found is that If you don't talk about it, that's when things start to slide You know, there's a really good behavioral scientist famous guy by the name of Dan Ariely He's out of Duke University and Dan studies the science of dishonesty Mm-hmm, you know before I met Dan, I thought that people either had integrity or they did What Dan kind of explained to me is actually the potential to have integrity or not exist in all of us and What happens is that we are deeply influenced by our environment And leaders are great influencers in this regard So, you know, so a leader is like a thermostat not a thermometer A thermometer takes the temperature of a room a thermostat sets it By their words in their actions leaders create an environment Throughout their company that influences everyone And so if they see a leader doing it or they see a leader talking a particular way People are likely to act in a certain way If they see a leader talking a particular way people are likely to actually be influenced by that and copy it So if a leader stomps around and talks things like I don't care how we hit this number We've got to hit this number no matter what right That influences a certain type of behavior hitting that number becomes what matters and what has integrity, right? if a leader talks about Actually asking questions about doing the right thing and you know, for example, there are lots of stories about Jeff Bezos who would meet with his CFO every quarter and at the beginning of the meeting He would always look at the CFO and say Is there anything in these numbers that makes you uncomfortable? Anything that you felt forced or pressured to do Anything that was misleading that in these numbers I think Amazon has a lot of ethical issues, but I respect the fact that Jeff Bezos and Other leaders i've talked to take that extra minute to ask those questions because that sends a powerful message that doing it The right way actually matters And like Ben Horowitz talked about doing the same sort of an exercise as well when he was a CEO so It's this element of intentionality Understanding as a leader that you influence others Understanding that you create the climate you set the tone and if you don't talk about

integrity, no one else will Right. Yeah, that's very much true. Now that i'm running the startup and We we work on AI products and there sometimes people ask like, okay, what do you do with the data? Or how do you collect the data? What about data integrity? So Right questions to think about you've got to be the one to set the tone by talking about how you're going to handle data And how you're going, you know when you analyze data, you're going to be mindful of the impact that Looking at the data the wrong way um impact and discriminate against people so But if you do it You've developed a reputation and a company I think that has an advantage Youll have a bumper

What are suggestions you would give to people if they happen to be part of being layoffs? How do they bounce back? Take care of yourself, right? Give yourself a moment to readjust. You know, you have options. Most people get a severance of some sort. You know, there's unemployment, you know, so that you have a little bit of a support system around you when these things happen. So like I say, don't just rush into like the next morning looking for, you know, every job under the planet. Like give yourself a moment to like grieve the process because it is a very difficult process to go through if it's the first time you're going through it. If it's the second or third time, you're like, okay, I know how this goes. And then I'd say like activate your network. Like, you know, there's people around you that want to support you to ensure that, you know, you have great quality of life and that you're gainfully employed. And, you know, like be transparent and reach out to your network and ask for the support.

We talk about checking your emotions at the door. We talk about not being emotional. You know, emotions are wonderful. You know, emotions can mess us up, but they also give us meaning. And emotions are data, and emotions can facilitate thinking. The problem is in what we do with those emotions. And a lot of us talk about controlling our emotions and how important it is. We're going to do a little demonstration. I'd probably like one or two of you to keep your camera on. And the others will turn their cameras off. Let me show you what we're going to do. For those of you who keep the camera on, you will be our volunteer leader, if you want to apply this to the workplace. Parent, if you want to do parent to child. Or teacher, teacher to student. I'm going to turn my camera off in a moment. In fact, I'll do it now. I will be the staff member, child, or student. And here's what we're going to do. If your camera is on, I'd like you to be that leader or teacher. I'd like you to position your Zoom window so that you can see these slides. And minimize your window so you're not looking at those of us on camera. The rest of us will be the staff member or a child or a student. And we're configuring our windows and maximizing them so that we can see those who are on camera. And again, if you're on camera, just make sure you can see the top and the bottom of the screen. What are we going to do? Well, the leaders are going to watch the slides and show no emotion. The rest of us are simply going to make mental notes and observe these volunteer leaders or parents or teachers. I am also going to mute myself so you don't hear anything in the background. So with that, let's begin in a moment. And there should be no comments. We'll do a debrief at the end. Thank you. Thank you. Okay. So here's a question. How many jokes, slides, cartoons were there? You can either say it or enter it in chat. How many jokes, cartoons were there? Yeah, for those who were on camera. Please. Okay. How many were there? Okay. So there were seven. There were seven. That's interesting. Now the two of you I thought did a pretty good job. You know, those

who have a poor poker face, which I don't think you did. You know, sometimes you see like these like, you know, a little bit of uncomfortable things or a bit of a smile appears. Didn't really see that. But I turn my video off, you know, I've seen these hundreds of times because I have a terrible poker face. And my wife always says, you're a bad liar. So, and I am a bad liar. But the problem with a poor poker face is emotions leak, right? So we show our lack of comfort. And it really harms our relationships, right? Because it might be, hey, boss, I hear we're going to do a reorg. Is that true? It is true, but it's confidential. I can't tell you. So if my emotions leak, it's like, well, you know, this organization, we're sort of, come on, really? You don't trust me to tell me? At home as parents or as teachers, it's the same thing, which is mom, dad, teacher, everything okay? Oh, yeah, everything's great. Great. You know, everything's terrific. No, it's not. And so what you're saying, you're sending the message that we actually don't talk about how we feel here. We suppress those emotions. But it's clear something's going on. It's really clear. Now, in this case, you had a really good poker face. So five or six slides. There were seven. Let me ask you, what did you do to stay neutral? Are you aware of the strategies you used to, like, not? I didn't think I was neutral because I was laughing my head off inside me. I didn't say it. I mean, I tried to. I didn't say it. I'm glad to hear you found him funny because some people say, oh, what did you do then not to smile? I'm curious. Yes, I really don't. I think I just kept I was just very conscious of me laughing inside and I didn't want it to bubble over. So I think I was making so much effort not to. Well, it worked, but the problem is you didn't realize there were seven. Could you actually tell me what the slides were in order, what the jokes were in order? I know. Now I could tell you what some of them were, but not the specific order. I think icebreaker one was the first one and Magadome was maybe the third one. Now, I don't. Great. So thank you so much, because this illustrates this point, which is this comes from the work of James Gross, a psychologist at Stanford who PNPN has interviewed. Brilliant researcher, excellent presenter, a very nice person. What he says is suppressing that smile, those emotions cost us. There's a cost. If we're suppressing, we're not paying attention to what's going on. And so we say there was five slides. No, no, there are seven. What was the order? Well, there was like icebreaker. This happens in meetings to me sometimes. We call it like spacing out sometimes or at home. You try not to react. And it's like, what did you just say? And so, look, there are times to suppress. Absolutely. Because maybe if you didn't suppress, you would say something you would regret later. So please, you know, suppression is important and we can do it. We all do it and that's fine. But we shouldn't use it as our go-to or main strategy. Because of this issue.

we're going to be talking about smart goal setting process. And of course, we'll talk about your plan to success and we'll discuss five winning mindset strategies, how to get perhaps sometimes through the challenging times, how to keep you on track and how to win your day every day. All right. So smart goals. Smart goals were started out in the 80s. 1981 is when smart goals first came about. Some of you probably have set the smart goals at your companies. Perhaps you have tried them personally. Maybe they have been successful. Sometimes most challenges come from maybe a little bit of a misalignment, feeling that the goals may be a little bit more mechanical. And so you go through the process without really paying too much attention as to how you are personally aligned to your goals. So the purpose of today's conversation is to make sure that you are aligned to your goals. You understand your why's. You know how to execute. You know what will be the challenges. And you reach your success

ultimately. So let's talk about it. Now, first things first. The S, of course, stands for specific. Now, I can't emphasize enough how important this point is. Clarity is key. Now, what is this your goal? Why is it important to you? What outcome are you looking to achieve? What is the end result that you want to accomplish? Now, that is first question that you should ask. Because without your why, without clarity on what it is you actually want, you're probably going to get derailed very early on in the process. For example, your goal is maybe to get your certification in Agile. And that's that. I mean, it's a process. So that's what you want to do. That's your goal. But ask yourself, why is certification at Agile important to you? What competitive edge would that give you? What is it going to require you to do? What do you want to accomplish for that certification? So these are actually the underlying goals. So your goal here is not just getting an Agile certification, but the goal is to move perhaps your career forward or to be more effective at managing your team. Or maybe you want to get an Agile mindset, and this is where that would be a helpful tool for you as a life skill. Or as an Agile, I see it more of as a mindset. But maybe that's something that you want to apply to your personal life. So understand what is your underlying goal here. Now, also equally important is understanding what are the requirements. Now, going back to the I want to get an Agile certification, I want to be a master of that. So maybe, so what are the requirements? What do you need to do? What certification do you need to get? What exams do you need to take? What experience do you need to have? How will you be practicing this? All of this is hugely important. Now, what are the constraints? What are some of the challenges? Maybe it's a cost-associated challenge. Maybe you need to go back to your employer and ask for that. Maybe this is something that you're getting from your own savings. This is, again, just an example of what may come as a challenge. Maybe it's time. Maybe time is of an issue. Maybe you have a really full schedule, and then you need to think about what would that timeline look like for you. Now, who else needs to be included? Who can help you with this? Is this your team? Is this yourself? Is this somebody else? Understand the dependencies. And of course, another thing to consider here, when do you want to do this? Is this a today situation? Is it tomorrow? Is it, as we're talking about, the remainder of the year? Maybe it's three months from now. Maybe this is really not a this quarter's initiative. Maybe you're thinking about something down the road. And why it's important is because you're then able to prioritize this properly for yourself. And in your mind, you're preparing yourself and are in a commitment to this project. You want to be committed. Now, we're skipping to measurable. Now, how are you going to measure your success? What would progress look like? So achievement of what will clarify you being successful at getting this done? Is it the certification? Maybe it's something more personal. Maybe you want to drop x number of pounds by the end of the year. So you're not pushing this off until the end, but you're creating extra steps as to what it is that you need to be accomplishing along the way. How will you measure your success and you tracking towards that success? Now, achievable. Now, is this doable? Is this something that you are actually committed to? Now, this is a question that I always ask my teams. And so how committed are you to this? Because if you're not committed and if this is not achievable, if you're looking at this and it's already looking pretty overwhelming, then you really need to rescale your effort. And that's OK. I mean, that's absolutely normal to do because we have won things yesterday. I mean, we want the results done way back when. You want to be already reaping the benefits of your results. But look at this now. Look at this goal. How are you feeling? And notice, is this making you excited? Are you feeling the dread? Where are you in that process? How? What is

your reaction? How are you feeling about that? So do you reasonably believe you can achieve this goal? Now, ask yourself, on a scale of 1 to 10, how confident do you feel or think that you will actually do what it takes to achieve this goal? Are you committed? Where are you going to check that commitment? Are you going to do what it takes? Are you going to get up every morning and go for a run or do a swim or something else? Think about it. How committed are you to this project? Now, what skills are required? I mean, do you have the right skills and capabilities to achieve this? I mean, think about this. I mean, this is another aspect to consider when figuring out whether this goal is achievable. For example, I'm not a runner at all. I try to run. It is just not my jam. So for me to say, I'm going to run a 10 mile by whatever next week is probably not a reasonable goal. I don't have the skills to have the right breathing. And I don't have the capabilities of a runner to run a 10 mile by next week. So it just won't happen. So for me to put that goal in is probably not reasonable. But what is reasonable is for me to maybe take a short run or at least something that I can actually accomplish that will get me motivated and excited. Now, another thing is very, very important. Now, the amount of effort that you're going to put into this goal, is it going to be in alignment with the end result? And this is hugely important because this is where the cognitive dissonance happens. Because sometimes you think you want really this and you're all pumped up about it. But the end result here is just not enough to get you motivated. And it will maybe enough to get you started. But once you start experiencing the hardships or difficulties or challenges, you're probably not going to be aligned with the end result. So make sure the effort equals to the end result. Now, relevant and realistic. Now, how meaningful is this goal to you? Is this even your goal? I mean, I can't tell you how many times somebody puts out a goal and after having conversations on exploring why this goal is important to you, it comes up that this is not even your goal. So understand why this is your goal, why it's important to you and how aligned you are to this goal is going to be what's actually going to be moving the needle forward for you. Now, what is your motivation? What is the end result and why this end result is super important to you? Ask yourself as a coach. This is an exploratory conversation with yourself sometimes. Why is this hugely important to me? What am I looking to achieve? Of course, time bound. You want to make sure that you give yourself a time frame by when you want to accomplish this. So if it's abstract, I want to someday do this, it's a vision. And even a big vision has an end result. Usually, say, I have a three-year vision or a five-year vision, but there's something there. But it's a little bit more abstract. If the goal is not determined, it's not really a goal. So you want to always say, by when do you want to accomplish things? Set yourself with a timeline by when you're going to accomplish this portion, by when this portion. So you have something to help yourself measure.

ideas I think to kind of put on the table for people that the idea that we have some control over emotions really important. Idea number two, there are different strategies we can use and we want to have lots of tools when we go into these situations. Idea number three, different tools have different success rates in different situations and so we want to be really smart about the tools we're using and practice and notice what works for us and realize that this is something you can get better at over time. These so-called soft skills matter an immense amount. Do you want to be part of a work group where the person is calm, focused, warm, appropriate or do you want to be in a work group where someone's flying off the handle, stressed out, yelling at people

and off topic? It's easy. You know where you want to be and you want to be one of those people that others want to be on a team with.

Deep and slow breathing can help us move our emotions toward calm and joy. Now let's count to four, breathe in and then let's count to eight together and breathe out. One, two, three, four. Four and then breathe out one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight. Let's breathe in again, one, two, three, four and then breathe out one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight. Breathe in again and then breathe out one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight.

I have heard that you're some I actually read other books and someone mentioned the interpersonal dynamic course changes life by he's a former CEO of a coaching school that by enabling him to understand like he had judgment on other people in themselves his whole life and getting in touch with feeling what other stories you could tell that like what are the impacts that people have got from either reading the book the connect book or attending the course that you that you founded. Well I remember one of our alumni one of our students told the story he was a consultant and he was having trouble with the client worried about it and worried that the client wasn't happy with what he was doing and rather than trying to fake it he opened up about that and he said it led to a rich relationship and much closer relationship. So he took the risk could have been that a client would have said you're right or how could you say that how could you do that that's that's one sort of example. There are other examples in which people in a sense give feedback that they couldn't talk think they could give before and it turned around a relationship that had been highly problematic. The people who say I feel I have more use more of myself available. I don't have to hold myself back into a narrow image. So we hear a lot of stories of that. In fact we get emails and calls from alumni of 10 20 years ago and they say I'm still using this course. When alumni get the reunions come together this is the one course they talk about and how they may not use in all the areas they could but they say this is really had a profound effect on how I relate. I remember one person who went back a sort of a middle manager and had a conversation with teenage kids that he said in the group they said I sometimes appear like I don't listen to you think I don't listen to you and they said that's right and it opened up a wonderful discussion. So we hear a lot of stories about people applying this to work to family to friends to recapturing relationships they thought they lost. Yeah that's that's very very helpful to hear and yeah great stories.

We're curious to hear your insights on a few topics. The first one is you have worked at very big organizations and you assume that you have experienced like changes in management or strategy. We're curious, how would you suggest a leader to handle changes in their organizations and in the meantime, still being able to drive results, deliver innovation and help their teams? Yeah, I guess there are three things that I think about there as sort of thematic. The first one is attracting the right people, right? Easy in a way to hire people. It's difficult to hire the right people. So I would say, understand what your requirements are. Hire the people who are best. Not necessarily, it's not always the smartest people. It's not always the best qualified people, but it's people who match the thing that you're trying to change. For example, it's a cultural change you're trying to achieve then how is someone who's an engineering expert in one particular discipline, how are they gonna help you with a broad cultural change? So you hire

people there who understand the workplace, understand the different, diverse populations in the workplace and can make them work together. That's a different kind of hire. So it's very important, I think, that you attract the people that you need for the change that you're trying to accomplish. If it is indeed a engineering type change or a new technology that you're changing, then obviously you will try to hire at least a proportion of the new staff with an engineering expertise. For example, artificial intelligence, you're not gonna wanna hire a generalist for that, you're gonna hire a specialist. Retention, really important. There's no point in hiring a whole bunch of people that you have walking out the door. I have been doing a little bit of homebrew research on what they call the big resignation. A lot of people seem to be leaving their jobs. It's been going on since 2019, but it's really taken off now. And if you look at the numbers, in the United States, for example, last November, it's something like 4.5% of the entire working population has resigned. Now, you would imagine that those people will be looking for new jobs pretty quickly because people need money to live. Again, I've done some homebrew research, and it looks like there's a lot of roles out there that are not attracting people. I've seen lots of good jobs sitting out there with big recruiters for one month with no applicants. And I don't mean one or two, I mean like a lot. So that's why retention is one of the reasons that retention is really key. The other reasons is that if you've got lots of people leaving, they're gonna leave expertise, the expertise is gonna leave with them, and you're potentially going to have single points of failure in your organization. So when people leave, they take their expertise with them. Regardless of how much documentation there is and how many systems there are, a lot of the value that you bring to a firm that you work with is in your head, understanding the organization, understanding the culture, all this sort of stuff, that's all in your head. And then the third point is motivating. So how do you motivate the staff that you have to do the best that they can possibly do in the organization? And I think that changes subtly over time. I think when I joined the workforce, there were two big things that motivated people. I mean, you're like way out there, but the two things that you really cared about was reward and recognition. So how do I get paid? That's one metric. And then the second metric is, how much am I appreciated in the workplace? And how much do people really recognize the value of what I do? They were the two primary metrics. Now I think there's a whole bunch of other stuff. Do I work with a diverse workforce? Do I work in a firm that cares about my wellbeing? Do I get benefits that are relevant to me? I don't want necessarily tax-free, x-y-z benefits. I want a caring environment. Am I allowed to bring my pet to work? All these things that are like, maybe a little bit less tangible than simply reward and recognition are becoming important now. And especially I think in this big resignation sort of environment, it's sometimes the subtle little things that are important to people and that need to get recognized. That's what this is.

And I mean, a little bit related to what we're talking about in terms of remote working situation. In, in anyone's given kind of work relationship sometimes they have to work with not just for relationship of for people, it's actually you interact with probably like dozens of people in an organization to get something done. And in that case, they might have never met in person, or they, they may be mostly meeting virtually, but kind of have a few of size to me in person here and there. How would you suggest someone to to start creating a good relationship in that kind of environment, not just what's for people but maybe they have to do it with more. Yeah. Let me talk about that first and I'll talk about in a group setting. Yeah. So, I think it's notion of when

you're with somebody. Can you add on the sort of personal relationship. So for example, before we started our conversation. You talked about your what your old son. And we talked about what you're doing with your organization. Right. And what it meant to you. So we can always spend two or three minutes at this more personal level. And particularly if you remember and the person maybe the last time talked about to their partner had been a little sick. Do we ask again how are they and are things better and what sort of pressure has that put on you. We can add that and we could also share more. We can say, gee, I'm really excited about this new project I'm working on because I think it has potential. So they know what's important, and they can help me in ways that they think it's going to help a project right now we talked about a team, it gets a little different. But, but again I think that usually there are personal reasons behind the conceptual points we make. So if somebody is making a case that we ought to reach out reach out to new clients. We want to know, not just is that going to help our bottom line. But what are other things they hope to happen. Does this have the possibility for way to modify the services we provide. What do they find exciting about it. So we could all and if we see somebody being bothered we can stop and say, you know, you seem disturbed about something what's going on for you. So that we can have those sort of conversation where it's person to person, not just object to object. Right. So, partly is to pay attention to other people's reactions and watch if they're bothered or if they excited and kind of add on from there. Yeah, that's great. Yeah, thank you.

You mentioned kind of helping on other teams to work more collaboratively. And you, I think you previously mentioned you also help teams work more inclusively. I think kind of inclusivity and collaboration is often kind of discussed nowadays, like how to do that. Besides what you just mentioned, is there anything else you want to add to like helping teams to become that way? Well, the leadership makes a huge difference, right? And I'm usually working with the leader of the team. And interestingly, what came to mind was a client I had a long, long time ago, who wanted help improving his listening skills. And because the employee survey had low marks on his listening. And I asked, well, how do you think coaching would help? And he said, well, you could recommend a class maybe or some books or, you know, well, what I noticed in my initial interview with this leader is that he exhibited all of the listening skills that I know of, right? He paraphrased, he paraphrased plus, he was present, he was attentive. And I'm thinking, this leader knows how to listen. So I gave him a self observation exercise to just gather data. So the end of the day, look back on three conversations you had, give yourself a rating, how much on one to 10, how much you think you listened. Also rate how much you think the person you were talking with heard, felt heard on a scale of one to 10. And then jot down thoughts and emotions and any physical sensations you remember having. Because I don't know what's going on. So I'd like more information for both of us. Well, when I met with him the next time, two weeks later, he said, well, it's a different issue. And I said, well, what is the issue? He said, I don't feel that anyone here has anything worth listening to. You get that? Like, I'm the one who knows. They really don't have anything to offer. So that's what came to my mind. When you think about in leading inclusively, leading collaboratively, it again, it depends so much because if I'm working with a leader who really believes in what the people bring, all of the people at the table bring and wants to create conditions that they can all bring themselves to the table and offer what they have to offer and who wants to have a clear decision process so that people know how

we're going to make decisions. And all of that is part of it versus a leader who really disregards certain people who are part of the team, doesn't see the value they bring. Whole different approach with one versus the other. And then when you have that first scenario, a leader who really wants to create, then there are wonderful tools available, like how to run the meeting, how to do brainstorming, being clear about how your decisions are going to be made. Sometimes they want to make all decisions by consensus, which I think that's a mistake. I think it's a worthy goal, but it's like, here's the decision we need to make together. We want to reach a consensus. If we don't reach a consensus, how will the decision be made? It'll be John or Susan because it impacts their team the most or because they have the most knowledge and skill. So we go for consensus, but it's clear up front how we're going to decide if no consensus is reached. And my husband, we used to work in the government, wouldn't matter, any corporation, but his boss would say, I want input from everybody. And it was so clear, he already had made his decision. And he was just going through stuff. Well, people know that. So it's like shifting to a place where I really care what people think. I really want their input to this. I have ways of working and I train people ways of working together so they get the richest or to stop and get everybody a deeper understanding of the issue before continuing to make a decision. There are ways to do that that work really well. So lots of tools I can bring off the shelf as needed. So is that helpful? Yeah, yeah, absolutely. I think it's kind of depending on the mindset of the person you're interacting with and what they what their real issue is. Yeah, yeah, that's very much true. Thank you so much, Sunny.

this environment, like what do you hear from engineering leaders as top challenges and priorities? Some of the big challenges that I see a lot of leaders running into is when they were scaling fast during the last couple of years, let's say they got a little lax and got a little chaotic about how they did what they did because they can hire a lot more people around them. But now that they're in a contraction mode, some of their processes and operational ways of working are chaotic, right? And they just contribute to the angst people feel within the organization. So I think, I talked to a lot, this comes up a lot in my CTO coaching, is just about how to build the consistent rhythm of the organization so that it's highly predictable, that people can expect that the sprint meetings happen at the same time and that you're putting the right amount of stuff into the sprint, that you're not overloading anyone, like all those things cause chaos, right? And what we wanna be able to do is have just consistent rhythm of how we operate on a regular basis. That's a great point, yeah, thank you. So it's like kind of figure out what could make it consistent and make an environment, the processes that help with the scaling. Yeah, so I was talking to a CTO the other day and I was like, well, so what's your roadmap? And he goes, well, it's across these five different documents, right? The roadmap is managed by five different parts of the organization in five different ways. And I'm like, well, that just adds cognitive load to the organization. And every time we have something that just adds more cognitive load to the organization, the organization is gonna be less effective overall, right? And so, just thinking about how we can lower that cognitive load, manage everything on the roadmap in the same manner, things like that, it just lowers the cognitive load, which then gives you more time and more consistency for how you deliver on your mission. Less interruptions, less difficulty, less roadblocks along the way, right? Okay, yeah, so it's like figure out the processes that can improve efficiency and interaction.

I'm curious, what approaches do you use to help your clients with stress management? Well, the first thing I do with any client, so if you and I were working together, for example, is get really clear what is it you want to have be different in your work, in your life. You know, what are your coaching goals? I help my clients write goals that are really clear and specific and as measurable as possible. And then learn, I have a questionnaire and some assessments I do so that I can learn enough about my client that I can make an assessment based on how I'm trained as a coach on what I think is going to help them the most to achieve their goals, specific goals. And what will open up for them if they do achieve those goals, whatever they might be. So every single coaching engagement is different. I don't have anything that's canned, right? It depends on you, it depends on your coaching goals, it depends what you want help with. And then I sort of reach up and pull things off of my coaching shelf and apply them to you and what you want help with and it's very common for me to start out with either, with some way to help you manage your own nervous system, right? And your energy, because it's so important as a leader. And so that could be a leadership embodiment practices from Wendy Palmer's work. It might be positive intelligence, there's a six week bootcamp I often start my clients with where they learn mental fitness practices that help them shift from their survival brain where we're often hanging out when we get triggered and when we're under pressure and stress and we are not very effective when we're there. We're in habitual patterns of our personality under pressure. And so mental fitness practices help be able to consciously purposely shift to other parts of my brain where I have access to my knowledge, my skill, my intuition, my empathy, my superpowers really. And so that really speeds up what we can do in coaching. So I really often start there to help people manage their own nervous system and their own energy, be able to shift to the part of their brain, mostly right brain where they have access to skills and abilities that they don't have access to when they're running under pressure. I'm not sure I answered your question, but that's commonly where we start. And I have found that if we do start there and create a foundation, it helps people in all aspects of their life, not just at work. And then whatever we tackle in coaching, we can get more done faster because they have this ability that they didn't have before we started coaching. That's great. So it's practices for mental fitness as well as practices that kind of help us have a way to be more present and not triggered by the pre-wired survival mode and be in the mode way that we get to live. You know, because we know that maybe less than 10% of the meaning that people make from what we say and what we do comes from the actual words we use. So maybe 90%, 80 to 90% come from our energy and our body language and our facial expressions and the tone of our voice. And so being able to shift out of being triggered and in my survival brain to this other part of my brain, which I call center in positive intelligence, they refer to it as sage and in many different methodologies, they have a different name for that, but you know it right when you get there, it's like things are clearer. You can take in more information. You have more courage, right? The chance that the decision you make and the action you take when you're coming from that part of yourself, being effective is much greater than if you take action from being triggered and in your survival. So yeah. So it's really an important part of the way I work with people and increasingly in recent years I do more of that. So I mean, I have certifications in six different coaching methodologies and so I can help clients where they are with what they want help with to help them reach their goals. I use a different mix for each client. So it's all custom.

What other suggestions do you have for new managers and new leaders or managers and leaders that are still looking to hone their leadership skills? Well, you start by talking about present conditions. So let me go there for a minute. We've now in our third year of the virus, we've been isolated, we've been communicating by Zoom, and that in many ways has estranged us from each other. Also we're hiring new people that we don't get a chance to know. And so a lot of what is being cut out is the personalness that often occurred in the past when all of us were at the office. We'd have coffee with somebody or lunch or stop by their office and get to know them on a personal level. And the trouble with Zoom is it's all business. But we're not robots. We're not Mr. Spock from Star Wars. We have feelings, we have a life. So let me tell you an interesting story. One of the things that we're seeing in Silicon Valley to bring back the more personal connection is that I've known executives who have been running meetings by Zoom, who spend the first 10 minutes of the meeting with each person answering the following question for a minute and a half. If you knew me today, this is what you'd know. So for example, if you knew me today, you'd know that I'm really intrigued with this conversation. If you knew me today, you'd know that I'm excited because my grandson just got into a special program at college. If you knew me today, you'd know that I'm a little worried because I'm having some trouble with my eyesight. If you knew me today, you'd know that I'm working on a new article that I'm really interested in, et cetera, et cetera. So in a minute and a half, I can share a lot about me that gets you to know me on a personal level. And we need that at work, not just for a personal connection, but if I know what my colleagues are worried about, are excited about, are spending their time with, the pressures they're under, I know how to relate to them better. So everybody goes around and has a minute and a half of saying, if you really knew me today, including the leader, and they find that this starts to build the personal bonds. And I think that what we need to do in today's fragmented world with Zoom, with hybrid, some of us in the office, some of us working at home, is to fill in those gaps so that we get to know what's just behind the tasks that I'm talking about. What are my hopes? What are my concerns? What do I want to work on? What do I need help with? And we need to fill that in. And that has occurred in the past because we're all in the office. And we got to know each other much quicker and much better than we certainly can by Zoom or by email. Right. Yeah. So it's kind of like, how do you, how do you on purpose create a chance to understand someone better in a personal level, even on its remote and you're not standing next to the coffee table, coffee. Right. Right. Yeah. I think that that's very good advice. Certainly.

it's very important. It's like that's what keeps us motivated to achieve that. Then how would you suggest like kind of thinking about the why like where does someone start? Is this from value or something else? Yes, absolutely. And you have to understand what your values are, right? Because ultimately, if you're thinking about your why, or if you think about your goal, and then your why, sometimes these things are not very aligned. Because you think you want something, but then it's conflicting with your other values. So when you're setting up a goal, make sure it's aligned to the things that you value. Like for example, you want to get your MBA on a fast track, right? Right. But you value your time off, right? Your wellness is your top priority. This is your number one goal. But getting an MBA on a short track, for example, right, or getting anything on a short track, you know, example, like you will have to invest the time and effort in getting this

done. Now, this is going to be immediately in conflict, right? So make sure a your values are not in conflict, but because you may be valuing higher education, or you may be valuing knowledge, you know, as your other value, right, in conjunction with your, you know, let's say wellness value, right? And but you have to understand what's important. And are they in conflict with each other, how to make these values work well together, right? Maybe then you have to think about like, maybe my, this extensive goal to get this MBA done is not, you know, it doesn't have to be done in the next, you know, one year, maybe it's a two year process. So you have to reevaluate where that belongs, where both values are not in conflict, right, where they're, you know, working well together to support your goal, right? So because if you don't value, I mean, if you value your time here, and your wellness, you know, and all of a sudden, you get stressed out by the short timeline of achieving this MBA goal, you're not going to get there, because ultimately, somewhere along the lines, you're gonna get overwhelmed and quit, right? So this is where this needs to interact very well. Sounds like someone has to take some time to sit down and really kind of get in sync with their own values and etc, before they can write down all these goals. Absolutely, absolutely. So you, your values, right, and your why, why is this meaningful to you? This is where the values come through, right? Why is this important, right? I think the importance and the why shows through this, the SMART goals, you know, throughout pretty much every section is that how aligned do you feel, and always check this against your values, like, you know what I mean? Even, like, we talked about the time bout, when relevant and realistic and inachievable, right? Even immeasurable values will come through, right? So you are specific, absolutely. So always understand yourself at your core, and what it means, you know, for you to have these goals, and where you might potentially have a conflict, so you can resolve that. As soon as it becomes visible, you know, you can absolutely resolve that. Because if you're not paying attention to your why, ultimately, you will end up giving up. Yeah. Yeah, sounds great. I think that's, that's very helpful and important part. I think we can progress to the next parts. And then I'll ask more follow up questions. Sure. And of course, you know, the same information is going to be, you know, available to you, if you'd like on a, you know, in a PDF, so you can go through the worksheet yourself. So I'm sure Pian Pian will offer that as part of this conversation. So an easy tool for you to follow. Now, planning for success. First and foremost, again, clarity, right, getting really clear on what it is that you want. And here, I want to make sure that you document everything, right? Don't put an abstract goal. For example, I want to be happy. Right? I want to be happy is not a goal. I want to be happy as a state, right? So happiness is a state of being. So you need to understand what is it specifically that is going to make you happy clarity, and you know, specific understanding as to how things will tie together will help you to get to that end result. So you absolutely need to be very, very clear on what it is that you want, why it is that you want it, what is going to stand in the way what is going to help you when do you want this. So getting that clarity, you know, number one, make sure that exists there, what steps do you need to take? Right? And then again, making sure this aligns, I mean, you wrote down 100 steps in there. And there was a relatability, you know, question there, of course, you know, okay, so this the outcome, you know, relate, or is relevant to the effort that you would have to put in, right? Maybe, you know, let's say, I want to maybe lose 30 pounds, right? But that means that I have to get up at 6am and do two hour workouts every day, I'm probably not committed, right. And as soon as you're not committed, this is where you start saying, okay, so what else can I do? Maybe I need to refocus the goal, right? Maybe something

else needs to get readjusted. So clarity is key. Now purpose, again, can't emphasize enough, understand your why, why are you doing this, for example, for me to lose these 30 pounds that, you know, came with COVID, I would probably mean that I will have a better health, right? So is this my value? Is this important to me? So your purpose here, right, needs to be very much aligned with your values, right? Maybe it isn't, maybe you're maybe you value physical attractiveness, right? Maybe you feel that, you know, that's hugely important. So understand why you're doing this. Now, action, right? Unless you take action, nothing's going to happen, right? So this is kind of a bit of a newsflash, I know. But people who won lottery still went and bought the lottery tickets. That's as simple as that, right? You can't possibly expect that it's just going to fall on your head all of a sudden. And, I mean, in some cases, maybe sure, I mean, maybe, you know, you got a huge inheritance, but something else had to happen in order for that to happen, right? So if you're thinking of a goal, think about an action that you have to take, and that you're committed to, right? And that's huge, right? It's because, of course, you know, your brain is gonna fight this, you know, to the end, because action is going to be something new. It's like developing a new habit. It takes time. So but it has to be consistent, right? And you have to be accountable, right? So creating accountability process is going to be very important, whether you're joining the accountability group, whether you're finding accountability strategies yourself. I mean, that is going to be very important. Consistency in execution and taking action is what's going to drive your success. Most people fail, not because they didn't have the right knowledge. They had all the right knowledge. It's actually why most personal development things, you know, don't really work is because people don't implement them consistently. It's that's what's important, right? It's not because the strategy wasn't there. Absolutely was. I mean, the knowledge is there, but we're not here for the knowledge. I mean, I'm sure you already know enough to execute. But the thing is, you know, in our mindset is that for as long as we keep on acquiring new knowledge, it feels like we're doing something. Whereas actually taking action means doing something on the knowledge that you already have, putting it into action. So that's what that actually means. So consistency in that, you know, will also bring resilience as a kind of a positive side effect, right? For as long as you're consistently applying, you know, action, right? And everything that you've learned, right? You're going to develop resilience, right? So consistent application, you will learn how to not give up and just, you know, in spite of your, you know, how to not give up because of the setbacks. I don't want to say this wrong, right? So you want to continue to do what you set out to do. You want to fail, evaluate, learn, move forward, right? And failure is actually a good thing here because it's a learning opportunity. As soon as you stop failing, you stop learning. So look at failure as a positive thing. So for as long as you're learning and moving forward, that's where that is. Now, self-reflection is where you're going to learn how to apply sometimes failures, sometimes successes. You have to look at both, right? And see how that's moving you forward. How do you need to realign your strategy, right? And of course, you know, self-acknowledgement, right? So don't take yourself for granted. Don't take your progress for granted. If you want to establish any kind of habit, right? Any habit loop has a self-acknowledgement involved and there's a reward. So self-acknowledgement is a reward. Take a look at yourself, right? Make sure you look at what you have accomplished, what you have learned, how you've been able to succeed. Maybe it wasn't this big bang, but you still move forward. You're further than you were when you started. And that is a positive thing. Look

at that, learn how to celebrate this, learn how to acknowledge yourself because that's how you're going to continue moving forward. This is how you're going to continue.

Based on your observations and what people told you, does that actually work better when the leader expressed that like I'm worried that we might not be able to meet this deadline or we might not be able to get this customer? Does that lead to better outcome than leaders saying like, don't worry, we'll get through this, things like that? And it's possible that they know it also that you're worried. And if they don't know it, they see you worried and are going to wonder what the hell is going on. So rather than having them fill in that blank, why don't you tell them? Okay. Yeah. So it's, it's people have sometimes have intuition, they can see through things. So it's better to be honest than kind of pretending to be heroic in some sense.

How much time do you suggest leaders to spend cultivating relationship and trust? And what would you do if the team actually tell them like I'm feeling burned out? So a couple of different things. It depends on the amount of time you've known a person. So if someone is on boarding and still in their first 90 days, I would spend more time cultivating the relationship and the trust. Once you kind of put the put the money in the piggy bank in the trust piggy bank as you will, then you already know the person they trust you can spend less and less time. So I think you can spend less time over over a long period of time because we can fall into our weekly patterns. One piece of advice that I think is really helpful is to make sure that you do a either a monthly or a quarterly one on one. That's not into the tactics and the details. Quarterly or monthly one on one is much more about a career conversation. That's much more elevated. That's like, how are you doing overall in your life? Where do you want to go and how do I support you in that? It'd be easier to carve out that time than to mix it in a tight 30 minute one on one. So I would suggest building that in as good manager hygiene to put in. And I think doing that over time helps with the burnout. And of course, there's much more tactics, which is actually eliminating workload. But let's say that is a less movable object than it's spending the time on the care and relationships. That's a really good point. Yeah. Thank you. I think one thing I talk about with some of the company leaders, how do you help people maintain the new managers to have the mindset of, OK, when do you elevate from managing the projects and getting deliverable to thinking, OK, these are humans and they want to grow. And how do you help cultivate them and help them grow besides delivering the projects and products? Yeah, it's very important. Another rule of thumb that I asked people about is, you know, let's say you have a 30 minute one on one and your normal pattern is you spend 30 minutes, 100 percent in the performance. You kind of starting. All right. Give me an update on X, Y, Z. If that's the type of manager you are, just play with it a little bit. And in a 30 minute meeting, spend five minutes first. Five minutes saying, hey, how is your weekend? Hey, what's going on? How have you been dealing with this heat wave? And that can be a little bit awkward and jarring, especially if they haven't felt that from you before. And one way to shift it is to share first. Be like, oh, my gosh, I just had the best weekend. I took my my son to his first soccer game ever. And it's so great to see his excitement on that. What do you do in your weekend?

I did a talk for youth ministers a couple of months ago, and I decided to keep the quote, and I forgot where it comes from, honestly. And we were talking about envy, and especially around

social media. And initially it was gonna be on teens and preteens, but as it turns out, youth ministers also would experience envy. No, your congregation remodeled your home, or your sermons are well attended or retweeted. Envy's really corrosive. I experienced this a lot. And this is a strategy that is enormously effective. Not if, but when you're experiencing envy. Oh man, I wish I had their life. They're just like so perfect. Like look at all this stuff that's going on. Think about this. You can't pick and choose aspects of that other person's life. If you truly envy that person's life, and you could, you would have to trade your entire existence for that of that other individual. So if you could enter a body swapping machine, if you remember the movie Freaky Friday, all right, that's what you'd have to do. You would have to become that person. Would you do it? If you would, please message me later, because I asked this question. I've yet to meet someone who says they would. They'd say, well, I'd love to have some aspect of that person's life, but no way. There's no way I would do that. And I will tell you, anytime I experienced envy, it takes me a couple of seconds to think about that and realize there is no way I would do that.

We have a lot of people who are working virtually or remotely right now and there are different challenges that comes with that besides benefits. So some of the challenges we heard from our community including like leaders are trying to figure out how to cultivate a high performing team, highly collaborative team in the virtual settings and how to especially kind of with the diverse team that spreads among different geographies and they might be from different generations as well. Some are from younger generations like Gen Z, millennials, some are from a little bit older generation. So yeah, how would you help the leaders in this kind of case? So this is always a challenge and you know, there's no easy answer for this, but for me what it really boils down to is cultivating psychological safety. We can't collaborate, we can't relax, we can't show up as our best selves with free-flowing creativity if we don't feel psychologically safe. So until you feel in your body that you can soften and show up as yourself fully, you're not going to, you're going to have a really hard time feeling enthusiastic. You're going to probably feel more stressed. You might even push towards burnout. You might have to take more sick days and that might be true for folks who are in a different culture, you know, literally remote and they're on a different continent and or those who are say on the same continent, but coming from a different cultural background, what do they need? So thinking about what is required for belonging, how can you cultivate that? Because you know, when you have a diverse team that can oftentimes just be a check box, just sort of saying, okay, yeah, we've got six people from six different backgrounds, check, right? But what are you really doing to allow those people to be heard and to reinforce that on a regular basis? So that becomes the onus of the leader and how are you cultivating this? How are you modeling this? What are the protocols that need to be in place? So really thinking about being more explicit in your core values and how that is set up in protocols for meetings, communications, whether that's email or phone, what have you, right? So really outlining that very clearly and modeling it, reinforcing it on a regular basis. I was talking with a colleague recently and one of the things that they have in there because they kept, they have this multi-generational issue. And one of the things that was really challenging for them was how do you not say it was Billy's fault, right? Nobody didn't do this, right? But what they ended up doing was going back and identifying core values. And once you have everybody's buy-in on those core values, then you can say, okay, our team values include this, this, this, and this, and

this is how they are manifest. So people get, and it's like, oh, then somebody can think to themselves, okay, I didn't follow through on this point, but it's not like they're being hung out to dry in a public whipping in front of everybody. And that has made a huge difference in terms of consistency in how the team is operating, what that means for folks collaborating and what that does for this particular company's clients and their experience of working with them. So they kind of outline the way how they interact and handle this kind of issues and think about like, okay, how do you handle specific issue if something comes up? Well, more to just making standard operating procedures, right? So being able to say, rather than giving an assessment or feedback in a Slack channel, it's one thing of saying, well, I feel like if you're looking at a design and you say, I feel like if we move this to the center, it'll look prettier or something like that. That's one thing. But really trying to give somebody constructive feedback probably shouldn't be in a Slack channel. And if they're remote, maybe it should only be on a video call. And would they prefer if there was a third person in the room just to hold the space, just asking the team, is this something that they want? How are we, what are the protocols for this? And also for the leader, what is the culture that you want to cultivate? Because there are certain challenges for everybody. It's requiring a little bit more of everyone to have this hybrid and 100% remote circumstances. And you can still have a very high performing team if you set the expectations and if you allow people to buy in and feel like they can contribute to it. So it's a two-way street. That's going to make people say, I own this and this is my contribution towards this. And if I fall short of that, then that's on me. And so that's, but that also allows you as the leader to say, okay, if my people thrive individually, the team is more likely to thrive. The organization will thrive. And there is more business continuity and there is more, my stress level as a leader is lower. Yeah, that's a very good point. So it's like thinking about setting, what kind of expectations, rules and procedures that everyone can, it almost sounds like kind of some kind of, what kind of things we can think about as way of acting and behaving and talking. It's like, what is the code for the culture and the team and how to keep it in mind to help everyone to thrive and feel safe and give people ownership. The more explicit that is, the better, because then people can really say yes to that, or they can say, maybe there should be a change in one of the words, or I disagree with that. I'm not a good fit to be here. So it's also include a process of kind of discussing and coming up with this kind of rules and culture together. Absolutely. Yeah.

So I think there's a trend right now going on that you probably are familiar with, something called quiet quitting. And some people are kind of feeling exhausted, partly due to the effect from COVID or maybe from remote work or other reasons. In the meantime, companies and leaders, they hope that the teams can still deliver results. You talk about the importance of building relationships. So how would you suggest leaders to be able to make sure the teams are still delivering results but also building good relationship with their team members and taking care of themselves and other people? Absolutely. And I think just the effects of things happening over the pandemic have been huge. I think there have been so many stressors that people deal with. I think even pre-pandemic, there have been studies done, I think from 2018 or 2019, which show that 62% of working women report feeling stressed every single day. But when some of these things got retested, resurveyed during the pandemic, I remember a stat that I think up to 76% of people reported more burnout because of everything happening, because of the stress, because of the overwhelm, because of the uncertainty. And what I think is really interesting is

there was a whole wave of the great resignation and now a lot of layoffs in tech. And then it's still, what can people do, especially when they are feeling like... I mean, I don't love the term quiet quitting because there is the pejorative of being a quitter, whereas it really is, you do your job, you do the boundaries of your job and you do it well rather than the extra. But regardless of that, I think that for leaders and managers, a lot of it is spending time to be caring and get to that personal touch with the employees and team members. I think that there is a lot of pressure. There is a lot of pressure with perhaps a looming recession and downturn. And I think typically when there is more pressure, we revert back to the things that we do well, which is run faster, do more, hit those OKRs, hit the metrics, just like squeeze the team more because you want that success and that performance. And I think that can be really, really counterintuitive. And so part of it is keeping the space to remember, OK, these are people, these are humans. The actual output may be the same, but if you're having a one-on-one conversation, rather than having it be 100% about what is it that they're not doing, what is it that they need to do more of, asking, asking, asking, maybe even shifting it to one-thirds, two-thirds, where you spend one-third of the conversation checking in on how are they. They might, in both cases, they might be feeling overwhelmed, stressed, not sure that they can do it. And the output that you ask for may remain unchanged, but it makes a difference that you're simply asking about it, checking in, and listening. One of the concepts that I teach and talk about a lot, especially with emerging leaders or leaders in periods of stress and uncertainty, is that working, especially as a technical leader with technical expertise, you spend a lot of time on performance currency, where my value is shown by the lines of code that I write, the number of roadmaps that I produce, the metrics and OKR, that's your performance. But I think increasingly, especially in times of quiet quitting, and in times of stress and ambiguity, it's switching from the performance currency to the relationship currency, especially as you take on bigger teams, scale more.

So it's first understand what you love and the passion part. And then is there anything else besides knowing that to help you overcome barriers? Because I can speak from experience, like, okay, I'm passionate about helping people grow as well. But there's a lot of barriers to make a business. Yes, absolutely. Yeah, if it were that easier, we would all be doing what we love, right? And so I think it's, you know, the prioritization of things that are important to you. You're like, well, I can't do that because I won't make enough money. You're asking the question, what more than just having the passion? So certainly having, so that's where I think getting driving results and planning is super important. So the analytical skills of saying, oh, what are the barriers? And then what are the resources I have to get through those barriers? And resources, I don't mean just, you know, it's a money thing or it's an education. It's actually people. And that goes back to the, okay, make sure you have strong people skills to be able to connect with them, influence them. You know, LinkedIn is an incredible resource because it enables you to connect with people you already know or somewhat know. Because you never know what they're going to know or who they're going to know to enable you to make those connections. And as you know, it's a lot of determination. At some point, people are going to say, oh, that's going to fail, right? There's a lot of people are going to say, that's not going to work. And how, you know, that's too much of risk. And I think that's where you need to balance the, okay, is this my passion? Is this what I'm meant to do? Have I thought through all the barriers? Have I figured out plans against that? And do I have the resilience and kind of determination to make

this work? And the wisdom to know that, okay, maybe this isn't working. Maybe we need to take a turn. And that I think you know better than I around the balance of finding that right path that's right for you. Mm-hmm. Yeah, that's a very good point. Yeah. I think it's part of the coaching is helping people figure out what is the inner passion and then help them to find a way, but not finding a way for them, but help them with the process, right? Yeah, absolutely. And I think, unfortunately, a lot of people spend their lives not discovering what they really want or not are being too afraid to let it out because it raises too many questions or too many risks. And so I'm always excited when people, whether it's starting a new business or starting a new role or discovering what they love in their current role, helping them find that without, you know, instead of being kind of the zombie, I'm just going to do my work and just get it done and get the paycheck. Someone used to joke to me, you know, well, at least I get dental insurance. So that's the reason, you know, for working, which is not the way we want to live. We want to live using our strengths, following our passions, helping others.

You touch upon retention, that's a key area that a lot of companies are looking to address, like what are the best ways to retain talents based on what you observe and your experience? Yeah, I would say two big ones. The first is recognizing who your best people are. The people that you absolutely do not want to leave your firm are your best people. So for that, I would recommend that you prioritize your top talent. So if there is, I don't know, money to go around, if there's status to go around, if there's promotion to go around, make sure you're pointing that at your top talent. There's really no point you're wasting those resources if you're pointing them at your medium to low talent. There's a whole question about whether you should even have medium to low talent, but let's put that aside for a minute. Assuming that every employer has got their population somewhere in the bell curve, obviously in the bell curve, you can't have everybody who's two standard deviations above the mean. So that's the first thing is make sure that your resources are getting pointed at your top talent. And then the second is to treat people as individuals. So to understand people at a deeper level than, you know, John is a one point one point five in somewhere in the hierarchy. And that means that, you know, he gets these benefits and the person who's sitting beside him doesn't. Right. That may be a good heuristic, like a good way to simplify a relationship. But really, you want to know what John is all about. And, you know, sometimes the equivalent of John or Jane is interested in a technical, a big technical challenge. That's what they really care about, the technical challenge. The rest of it's like nice to have. Some people really care about. Care most about what's going on in the workplace, but what goes on in their family life or their personal life. How do you make sure for those individuals, how do you make sure they're getting what they what they need? Some people work for, you know, some people work for a hobby. Some people work for something that's maybe not their family, but it's outside of work and really important to them. So, yeah, I think so. I think it's really important in order to retain people that you understand them at a deeper level than what's their role. What's their official designation within the hierarchy, for example, to understand them as people. Right. Yeah, that's a really good point in terms of understanding people and connecting the personal levels that touch upon, I think, empathy and being caring about the people that they work with.

And then since you have been a CFO from 32 years old, what are your top like leadership learnings, Jeff, based on your own experience and observations? Well, I have two stories. One is it comes from the American military where they say, maybe it was a general patent and they said at first, tell people what to do but not how to do it as a leader. And people will surprise you with how creative they are. And actually Eisenhower said a manager, see how did he say it? A manager gets people to do things and a leader inspires people to want to do things. So it's one thing to just direct if you're a leader, it's one thing to direct people, say, go do this. It's another thing to say, how do I inspire someone that they want to do it? So it's their motivation, not my motivation. And that's a big difference as you get older and more experienced and you're leading people, you try to think about how can you recruit people and train them and inspire them so that you all share the same goals. And then you don't micromanage them, you don't tell them necessarily. If you've hired the right people, you align on the goals and you say, go off and do it, come back, we'll trust but verify. And I'll check in, see how things are going. And if there's problems, come back and tell me about it. I'll try to help you overcome the problems. But in the meantime, I'm expecting you to get it done. So it's really kind of think about inspiring people and then like pick out what is the thing that is needed and then let them figure out the how part. Yeah, agreeing on what are the goals so that everyone's goals are aligned and then letting people figure out how to do it. And even if they don't do it as well as you, if you've been around 10 or 15 years and you're pretty good at your job, maybe you can do your subordinates job better than they can. But if you do it for them, then they'll never learn. So you have to let them try. It's like the kid has to learn how to walk and they have to fall down a few times before they walk. And so you need to let them fail in small ways so they learn, they get better. And ultimately if you hire the right people they'll get better than you at it. And then you have a lot of leverage. Fundamentally, no company has three employees of any size. Every company has hundreds of thousands or tens of thousands of employees. And so when you have a large organization to recruit and train great people, you're gonna get better.

careful. Well, now you've asked, and you kind of got the good lay of the land. What do you do? Well, we would say match tasks to the emotion. And again, you might find this somewhat counterintuitive, but if you kind of reflect a little bit on your life, hopefully this makes more sense. So I mentioned about giving feedback, but what about receiving feedback? What's the ideal quadrant in our mood map to help you really process that, to really like just do, huh, hmm, think about that. Pleasant emotions, feelings, but lower energy. If you're like too energized, it's like, okay, we're gonna do this, like you're racing ahead, right? You want to be that more receptive frame of mind. Someone's experienced a loss in their life, whatever that might be. Providing comfort to others requires that lower energy, low pleasantness feeling. It's not whether you agree with that person or not. This is not saying, you know, you shouldn't feel that way. This is how they feel. You owe it to them to kind of match that. And then think about you and your own life and your own space that you inhabit. What task would be best facilitated by a real high energy, high pleasant emotion, feelings? You want to inspire people, no matter what's going on. At the end of this, I want you to actually leave this session. If your energy is lower, that's fine. If you're inspired, cool. How great is that? How do you do that? And finally, you know, I understand that anger can be enormously destructive to people, to societies, to relationships. But anger does have a healthy component to it. Anger rises from a sense of injustice. Now, if

you believe we live in a very just society, then maybe there's no cause for anger. I happen to think that's, well, that's not the world that I live in. And there are times where anger is very justifiable. It gives you the energy to make this a better place. If you handle it well, if you don't, it just blows up, blows up in your face. It's really destructive. I'm also a huge fan of anxiety. Anxiety is actually, anxiety and I have a long relationship. And sometimes it means I can't go to sleep easily at night. But anxiety, you know, without anxiety, none of us would be here today. Anxiety means we look both ways when we cross the street. Anxiety means if you went to, you know, to school and graduated, you study for the exam. Anxiety really helps if it's a healthy form of anxiety. So think about this. Whether it's any kind of conversation or meeting at work, try to create that ideal emotional environment. Otherwise, you're kind of just like nailing it in. It's not that hard to do. So, you know, speaking of these statements about, ah, I'm worried about that, you know, or you shouldn't feel that way. You ask someone how they feel. How many times have someone just kind of dismissed how you felt and you realize you just don't get it? So again, this is more from parenting. Child asks, well, why can't I stay up late tonight? Typical answer is because. Kind of not helpful. Or a worry. You know, a very competent student says, I don't think I'm going to get into good colleges and I'm really worried. All my friends are talking about it. We oftentimes dismiss that. Oh, don't worry about it. You're doing really well. And it's this kind of hand waving, that dismissive thing. It's so invalidating. It's really frustrating. And it's really frustrating. This is such an important strategy. I'm going to come back to it in a little bit. But no matter what your question is to explore the inner emotional life of friends, family, and others, no matter what they come back with, a wonderful validating strategy is, I can see how you might feel that way. Or I can see how someone might feel that way. Now, if you want to build a relationship, I would try this. You're asking how you're doing, why, and rather than just dismissing it, oh, that's silly. That's ridiculous. Try this. All right. I can see how someone might feel that way. It's a validation strategy. It works because they do feel that way. You can argue, well, I guess you could try to argue that away. But that's a losing argument. And you should lose that argument. You should definitely lose that argument.

Some challenges I hear commonly faced by teams is conflicts. And yeah, and people are having kind of hard time figuring out how to resolve conflicts. I wonder in this kind of difficult situations, what would you suggest people to do? Well, it's not dissimilar from what we were talking about with giving and receiving feedback. So in conflict can be really good, right? If people are able to treat one another with respect and hear each other out and find common ground, I mean, it can really elevate the decision or the product as opposed to imagine if we all agreed all the time, it's been most of us wouldn't even be necessary. So I don't think of conflict to start with as inherently bad. It's that when we are triggered as human beings and we're in our defense mode and that's what's contagious, right? I'm triggered and I lash out in my unique way or I disappear because I'm stressed or whatever, then I'm no longer effective. And then you are impacted by that. And pretty soon we have what in positive intelligence we call a saboteur contagion. And it just kind of gets out of control. And later people need to make amends or they regret some of what they've said or someone's put down and they lose their moxie for two weeks. I mean, how is that helpful for a team? So can we as a leader and whole teams go through positive intelligence together and learn to do this together so that you get instead what we would call a sage contagion, right? So where we are people who make music together, like they're making

music, if that's like a sage contagion, right? It's that positive, really creative emotion, that right brain stuff that feeds on itself and then other people get involved and create the same kind of thing with a team, in a conference room around the table, working on something where they work together much more effectively and have create a culture where it's okay to say anything, right? If you're brainstorming, especially, and that if there's conflict, real conflict that arises, I teach teams to stop, to stop, to get centered, to ground, to go around the table and make sure everybody has a chance to say anything that hasn't been said and that everyone else is in feedback mode, meaning their only job in that moment is to understand the feedback or to understand what this person's saying. And so you do around a two of that to get things settled and then resume whatever the problem was you were solving together or whatever needs to happen. I've never seen it not be a whole new conversation. So that's like when you have conflict going on with the team and that's oversimplified, I have to say a bit. Yeah. There are ways though to turn it from being destructive and damaging to relationships and creativity to shifting to where you can work together effectively and resolve that. And one-on-one, it's, I settle my nervous system. I have a conversation with myself about, well, what's happening? Why am I upset about this? What do I want? What's the solution? I have a respectful conversation with you with your permission to share my view and to hear your view. And that's magic if you can do that. And there are skillful ways to do that, that help that I work with clients to learn. And if I were going in and years ago, I used to go in and do conflict resolution, the simple view of that is really to make sure each person is heard fully. And often that's enough because we get upset when we feel like we're not being heard. People aren't listening to us, it can escalate. So that often would be like, okay, say everything you want to say, Pam can now, did you, Dawn, did you, can you feed back what you heard? Did, you know, did he miss anything? Did he get it all? And then to reverse roles and do the other, I mean, that's like part of formal conflict resolution. And once each person feels fully heard, sometimes there's no more conflict. It's amazing. That's great. Yeah. So it sounds like the, to summarize, the key is to have everyone to be in first in the mode of being able to respect other people and being able to fully listen to other people and let everyone speak. And then also everyone is in the mode of kind of trading as a conversation to hear other people out. Yeah, there are social science research that kind of backed us up and talking about high performing teams that everyone often have a chance to speak in a team meeting. So yeah, that's kind of absolutely very helpful to hear. Thank you for sharing that. Yeah, you're welcome. I do want to add one thing that just occurred to me that I love about the positive intelligence. One of the superpowers of the stage, that's their language is in their brainstorming session, they have what they call innovate. And the game is kind of like improv comedy. It's like, whatever you say, it's like believing that whatever anyone might say, there's at least 10% truth in it or 10% of it I can agree with, right? And so the game that we play in those brainstorming sessions is whatever you say, I can say, well, what I like about what you said is, and find something I can sincerely, genuinely like about what you've said. Yeah. And then let that trigger some new idea or, I don't want to use the word trigger, inspire another idea. And so this is brainstorming, so anything goes. But the rule is, I don't say I love that idea or I like that idea because that gets into evaluation prematurely. What I like about that is this, and here's another idea. Well, in one-on-one conversations, when we talk about conflict, this can be a really useful tool, right? So no matter what you say, even if my body wants to go, that I don't agree with that at all, I call myself and I say, well, what I do like about that is X, find 10% and

then share what I'm thinking. It affirms people, right? It doesn't put them down or shut them up. It affirms them. And so at the end of the day, whether it's a brainstorming session for the team or it's a one-on-one conflict conversation, conflict resolution conversation, everyone feels a little bit better and a little more affirmed than if we do our normal thing, which is I hear what you say, I disagree. So I tell you what I think and it just goes, right? Does that make sense? Is that helpful? Yes, very familiar scenario. So have the positive affirmation, consciously kind of have the positive affirmation and not burst out with the first words, I disagree. Yeah, I disagree. What I like about that idea is I am something. And so it's the yes and. Yes and, yes. Right, if you've done any improv comedy, that's kind of a basis for that and it really helps teams. That's great, yeah. Thank you, that's super helpful to hear that.

We often start emotions events with the loving kindness meditation. The loving kindness meditation can help us get into a compassionate mind and enable everyone to share in a safe and compassionate environment. You can join future emotions events to practice with peers. You can also practice this meditation by yourself at home or at work in order to help you to stay calm and have an empathetic mindset to listen to other people. Now let's try this together. Please stand or sit in a comfortable position. You can keep your eyes closed or open. Just think about someone that you love, someone that you care deeply about and send this message to this person. May you be happy. May you care for yourself joyfully. May you be healthy and may you be safe. Now let's send this message to ourselves. Let's send some love to ourselves. May I be happy. May I care for myself joyfully. May I be healthy and may I be safe. Lastly, let's send this message to all the people out there. May you be happy. May you live joyfully. May you be healthy. May you be safe. Let's take a deep breath together to enhance the calmness. Pause. One more time, inhale through the nose. Pause. Exhale through the mouth. Thank you for practicing with me today and I hope to see you in future emotions events to practice different techniques to improve different kinds of skills that you would like to develop.

some companies leaders as not everyone can get promoted and how do you still provide a growth opportunity for everyone? And also if there are people who get promoted from ICs to managers, how do you help them to delegate and let go of some of the things that they were doing and help them evolve to the next level? Do you have any thoughts on this? Yeah, I think that is a big challenging area. So one is moving from individual contributor to people leader, it's just a pyramid. So if you have five direct reports and one leader, one of five people is gonna become that leader. So it's a numbers game in that case. And so, yes, not everyone's gonna get promoted, but on the flip side, not everyone wants to be promoted. And so, to your point of for an individual contributor, what is the development path either within role or moving roles that would be important? For the person who does get promoted and becomes a people leader, that's also a challenging part because you think, oh, I've been successful as an individual contributor because I get all this stuff done, right? Again, getting stuff done and super important drive results. All of a sudden you are now having to lead people who are getting stuff done. So yes, there's probably things you need to get done and drive results, but a more important role and more impactful role is how do you lead those people so that they get the most that they can get done? How do they grow and develop? And that includes giving tough feedback. So, as a people leader, you're thinking, oh, as an individual contributor, I was successful because I

collaborated well and people liked me. Then all of a sudden as a people leader, that's not the measure of success. It's not about being liked, it's actually about being respected and being respected is doing the right thing when it comes to people leadership. So if you lead a team and there's someone who's not pulling their weight and you're not doing anything about it as a leader, people will no longer respect you. They may still like you, but they may no longer respect you as a leader because you're not dealing with a performance issue. So from that aspect, it's important to do that. But more importantly, that is from the person who's not performing, it is a disservice to them to not call that out and help them grow and develop. Some cases that may be that person is just not in the right role. And so helping them get to the right role, but being very transparent and honest and clear on that feedback. I remember my dad telling me a story that he had to fire someone for a performance issue. And of course the guy was very upset, but a year later came back and he was very honest and said, this is not what's not working and this is not the right role for you because of X, Y, and Z. A year later, the guy comes back and says, that was the best thing that ever happened to me. Thank you so much for being clear. And thank you for firing me because I went on to find a career that he really loved and he was good at. And so, everyone says feedback is a gift. It doesn't feel like a gift when you're receiving it, but if you as a leader can give it in a clear and honest and unemotional way with empathy, that's where empathy comes in very strongly, then that person is better off in the long run. It may be hard in the short term, but helping them get through that to kind of see the insight and changes that they need to make or changes they need to make in their career if need be. And that's how you become a respected leader and people say, wow, this leader managed this person. And the flip side, obviously developing and growing people, the high performers, as a people leader, you think, oh, high performers, I don't need to do anything with them. They're just doing great. Oh no, that's huge opportunity because if they're already high performers, you give them a little bit of development and growth and they can grow even further. So making sure that you're spending time with the high performers, because the challenging performers take up a lot of time. And so finding as a leader, finding that balance between your personal work of doing stuff versus leading people, how do you balance between the different performers in your team and how do you continue to grow and develop as the leader at now this new level and the next level when you become a people leader, again, a new challenge, how do you lead through people? You're not touching every individual contributor in your team anymore on a daily basis. You're actually leading through the people. So even more so, how do you model what a great people leader looks like so that they can do the same to their team? Yeah, so it's a lot of learning along the way in each step.

how do you cultivate good coaching skills? So now becoming a manager, partly you might be still doing some individual work, but a big time is helping the team grow. As a coach and also former managers and leader yourself, what do you suggest good ways to learn the coaching skills? So the number one difference, I think, between coaching versus being an individual contributor is as a coach and as a manager, you do not solve their problems. It's going to be really easy for you to do so because they're bringing you a problem. They're asking you what to do. I think the natural instinct is to say, here's what you do. Based on my expertise, based on my knowledge, here's what you do. But the hugest difference of being a coach is to pull the answer out of them. And you do that by listening, by asking questions, by playing devil's advocate.

Because there is such a difference if you think of a metaphor, even think of a surly teenager. There is such a difference between a parent telling the teenager what to do versus a parent coaching the teenager through all the options and having the teenager come to the solution themselves. I think as a manager, you want your team to be independent, autonomous, and come up with the answer themselves. You don't have to take the answer. You can have a debate back and forth and co-create it. But you want them to have a large amount of ownership in it. And you want to be open and flexible enough to know that, hey, maybe they'll come up with an answer you didn't think of or a perspective you didn't have before. And I think that's what creates that level of ownership. And that's the main difference between coaching and telling someone what to do. Yeah, that's a great point of the key parts of coaching is like listening and then asking questions so that they can come up with their own answers and ideas. How would someone learn to do that if they don't have time to go to a whole coaching program to learn that kind of skill? So here's one tip. When someone comes and asks you what to do, don't give them the answer. You can say, hey, let's brainstorm about some possible solutions. So let's play a game. Why don't you come up with one option and I'll come up with one option? And you can play off each other and say, hey, let's spend 5, 10 minutes thinking about all the possible solutions. Let's be generative. Let's be open about that. And then after that time, then we can narrow down and say, hey, of all of these, ask the person on the other side, which ones of these seem practical, feasible? Because then together, you're generating a bunch of ideas. And then you're asking the person you're coaching to come up with what one or two would they want to move forward with. It helps to have that energy back and forth to show that you're almost equal in co-creating some of these ideas. That's great. So don't need to explicitly say I'm coaching you. It's more like we're partnering. We're brainstorming together to solve this problem.

And I mean, a little bit related to what we're talking about in terms of remote working situation. In, in anyone's given kind of work relationship sometimes they have to work with not just for relationship of for people, it's actually you interact with probably like dozens of people in an organization to get something done. And in that case, they might have never met in person, or they, they may be mostly meeting virtually, but kind of have a few of size to me in person here and there. How would you suggest someone to to start creating a good relationship in that kind of environment, not just what's for people but maybe they have to do it with more. Yeah. Let me talk about that first and I'll talk about in a group setting. Yeah. So, I think it's notion of when you're with somebody. Can you add on the sort of personal relationship. So for example, before we started our conversation. You talked about your what your old son. And we talked about what you're doing with your organization. Right. And what it meant to you. So we can always spend two or three minutes at this more personal level. And particularly if you remember and the person maybe the last time talked about to their partner had been a little sick. Do we ask again how are they and are things better and what sort of pressure has that put on you. We can add that and we could also share more. We can say, gee, I'm really excited about this new project I'm working on because I think it has potential. So they know what's important, and they can help me in ways that they think it's going to help a project right now we talked about a team, it gets a little different. But, but again I think that usually there are personal reasons behind the conceptual points we make. So if somebody is making a case that we ought to reach out reach out to new clients. We want to know, not just is that going to help our bottom line. But what are

other things they hope to happen. Does this have the possibility for way to modify the services we provide. What do they find exciting about it. So we could all and if we see somebody being bothered we can stop and say, you know, you seem disturbed about something what's going on for you. So that we can have those sort of conversation where it's person to person, not just object to object. Right. So, partly is to pay attention to other people's reactions and watch if they're bothered or if they excited and kind of add on from there. Yeah, that's great. Yeah, thank you.

Yeah, this is very helpful to have the overview of what is emotional regulation, the five stages. I'm curious, like, which part of that do you find most effective? You mentioned the changing the thinking part is what you focus on most. And for example, we read that in news articles that a lot of people under tremendous stress and pressure during the pandemic, and there's things that we can't control. In this case, like how would you suggest someone to, for example, manage their stress? And we also read in the news that there's some people who are kind of blowing out at their partners or other people, colleagues or people they encountered because of the stress that they accumulated. So yeah, just curious to hear what strategies. Well, great, Pam. Pam. So if I could answer all of those things in two minutes, I should get a huge prize because those are really hard questions. Let me have a go at this because I think you're asking just the right questions. So let me break it down. So the first thing I want to make sure that everyone understands is that, you know, you've got all these different possible strategies. Key idea here is that when we have emotions that we really find, they're going to be unhelpful for us. There are things we can do, and that's what these buckets or strategies refer to. And so the key idea is that we have some control, some control over our emotions. Now it's important to say that because it turns out that people who believe that they have no control over their emotions, that emotions are kind of like weather. It just comes and goes and you have nothing to say about it. Very reasonably, those people do not spend energy trying to change their emotions. If they believe they can't, of course they don't bother trying to change them. So the key gateway idea is that emotions are things that we can have some control over, not perfect control. I've never met anybody who has perfect control over his or her emotions. The people who I think are immersed in this literature and who practice these steps that we're talking about can become very, very expert at having lots of different strategies at their disposal. So that would be sort of like having a big toolkit. Imagine you're trying to fix something complicated. Our minds are incredibly complicated. And we show up with just a screwdriver to fix this very complex machine. Not going to go so well. But if you have multiple tools, the way you'd have multiple sort of experience with multiple forms of regulation, you're in much better shape. So idea number one is we can have some control over our emotions and then we can do that by using these different tools. The second key idea is that these tools are not interchangeable. That is to say, in some situations, we don't have control. Our boss has control. We can't just walk out of the situation and go find a new boss. We're stuck with some of our coworkers. We're in a family context. We've got the family we've got and we need to work with them and not just swap them out and find somebody else. So in each of these cases, some of these forms of regulation are going to be less relevant because some of them are not applicable. That's why it's so important to have different tools at your disposal so that you can kind of match the tool to the situation in order to maximize the chance of being in the kind of emotional state you think will be most helpful. So

idea number one, emotions can be controlled to some degree. Idea number two, you can do that regulation using different strategies. Idea number three, really important idea. Based on decades of work, we now know that it's not just there are lots of strategies and just use whatever you want. Some of these strategies are generally more helpful than others. And I'll give you a specific example. I talked about cognitive change. It's also known as reappraisal. Both of those are just referring to trying to change our thinking in ways that will change our emotional responses. And that turns out to be a very, very effective strategy in many situations. Not all, and we'll come back to that if you'd like, but in many situations, developing that capacity, using that capacity can be very powerful. Another thing that people do a lot of is something you referenced, Pian Pian, which is suppression. Another go-to strategy for people, specifically a form of response modulation, is just trying not to show what you're feeling. People just use that a lot. It turns out, although it can sometimes be very important strategically to not show what you're feeling in a particular circumstance, if you do that chronically, that's not good for you. We've done study after study showing that people who tend to chronically suppress positive emotions, negative emotions, don't feel any better for doing it. They may feel worse. They are more distant from other people because other people can't read what's really going on. And cognitively, they don't function as well because they're so distracted by trying to constantly monitor your emotional expressions. What's more, physiologically, the effort associated with suppressing emotions actually leads to a magnified physiological response. And there's emerging evidence that when you do that, suppress, suppress, suppress, you have all of these negative consequences, and you may even have some longer-term health consequences, including compromised cardiovascular functioning. So this is not just a little thing. This is a big thing because the strategies we choose to use on a regular basis either set us up for some success, like reappraisal or cognitive change, where we can think differently, that makes us feel better. People feel closer to us. Our health is better, not worse. And we contrast that to suppression, which is sort of the opposite. People don't feel as comfortable around us. We don't feel better. We're cognitively very laden and we're physically in worse shape. So I want to be clear on this third point, that different strategies have different consequences I'm making it sound like always use the cognitive change and never use suppression. That's not true because there are some times that using cognitive change can actually get you in trouble. I'll give you an example. Let's say you're in a really toxic relationship in your personal life. And you, each time that something flares up, you kind of make an excuse for the person who's really being toxic to you. That takes away the negative emotion. So in that sense, it's successful, but do you get out of the relationship? No, because you don't have the negative emotion to kind of push you out of the relationship. So by being successful in decreasing your emotion, by thinking differently, looking on the positive side, this person may change. This is going to get better. You feel a little better, but long-term you stay stuck in that bad relationship. So that'd be an example of where cognitive change, not such a good idea. How about suppression? I've said it's pretty bad news if you do it all the time, right? But sometimes we're in an interpersonal situation, negotiation, whatever the situation is in the workplace, and we need to manage our emotions. It's not professional to burst into tears in the middle of a negotiation, at least in most cultural contexts, that decreases your power, changes the whole set, and distracts everybody from the issues at hand. So in those cases, if you need to suppress because you can't do some other things, that would be better than not doing suppression. So Piantian, those are some key ideas, I think, to

kind of put on the table for people. The idea that we have some control over emotions, really important.

So practical tips in deploying cognitive reappraisal, particularly since our stress hormones usually outperform anything else. This is a great point, James. So in the moment, this is why I'm continually emphasizing practice and noticing your emotions and sort of trying out different things and anticipation. It's absolutely true, as James is saying, in the moment, particularly if it's a really high stress situation, even a pretty strong expert's not gonna be able to dynamically engage prefrontal cortex, which is required for modifying meaning structure of a situation. In English, we get overwhelmed and we can't think differently. So what we need to do is one of a couple of things. One, in the moment, and it's as old as can be, take a breath, go to the bathroom and just take a timeout, anything you need to do for a respite so you can calm down, because what you wanna do is you wanna distract, shift your attention away from what's freaking you out or making you super stressed. Give yourself that space, because it's only after you've had that space, you can calm down enough that you can actually creatively rethink the situation. So that's option one. Give yourself a breather, use that breather to calm down, then rethink. Option number two is anticipate that you're gonna deal with, let's say a boss or coworker who's really always just presses your buttons and preset your thinking in a way, it's sort of in advance, you're sort of setting up an appraisal that you think is gonna make you more resilient.

Mm hmm. How much time do you suggest leaders to spend cultivating relationship and trust? And what would you do if the team actually tell them like, I'm feeling burnout? So a couple of different things, it depends on the amount of time you've known a person. So if someone is on boarding, and still in their first 90 days, I would spend more time cultivating the relationship and the trust. Once you kind of put the put the money in the piggyback in the trust piggyback, as you will, then you already know the person they trust you, you can spend less and less time. So I think you can spend less time over over a long period of time. Because we can fall into our weekly patterns. One piece of advice that I think is really helpful is to make sure that you do a either a monthly or a quarterly one on one, that's not into the tactics and the details. quarterly or monthly one on one is much more about a career conversation. That's much more elevated. That's like, how are you doing overall in your life? Where do you want to go? And how do I support you in that? It'd be easier to carve out that time, then to mix it in a tight 30 minute one on one. So I would suggest building that in as you know, good manager hygiene to put in. And I think doing that over time helps with the burnout. And of course, there's much more tactics, which is actually eliminating workload. But let's say that is a less movable object than it's spending the time on the care and relationships. That's, that's a really good point. Yeah, thank you. I think one thing I talk about with some of the company leaders, how do you help people maintain the new managers to have the mindset of okay, when do you elevate from managing the projects and getting deliverable to thinking, okay, these are humans and they want to grow and how do you help cultivate them? And help them grow besides delivering the projects and products? Yeah. Yeah. Another rule of thumb that I asked people about is, you know, let's say you have a 30 minute one on one. And your normal pattern is you spend 30 minutes 100% in the performance, you kind of starting like, all right, give me an update on XYZ. If that's the type

of manager, you are just play with it a little bit. And in a 30 minute meeting, spend five minutes first, five minutes saying, hey, how was your weekend? Hey, what's going on? Hey, how have you been dealing with this heat wave? And that can be a little bit awkward and jarring, especially if they haven't felt that from you before. And one way to shift it is to share first. Be like, oh, my gosh, I just had the best weekend. I took my, my son to his first soccer game ever. And it was so great to see his excitement on that. What do you do in your weekend? So it sets the tone, especially if you're the manager to model the behavior first. Right? Yeah. That's that's a really important tip there. Yeah.

I remember you mentioned that you mentor employees and people from different countries and different kind of different phases of their career. Curious, what do you think, why someone needs a mentor and then how could someone find a good mentor? So I'll answer that in a few different ways. One is, I think there is, everybody's going to encounter situations that they haven't encountered before. So there are two ways to deal with that and both ways are valid, but one way takes a lot longer than the other way. So the one way to deal with it is don't have a mentor, don't have anybody to help you, just continuously make mistakes. It is, there's validity in that, but it just takes a long time to make all the mistakes that you need to make in order to be successful. And it's also dangerous. Yeah, I'm a great believer in making mistakes and learning, but you know, and all the time you can make quite a big mistake that actually hurts your career. So it's like, to me, a mentor is kind of like, you go, let's say you go to Canada and you want to walk some trail around a lake, right? And the trail is like 20 miles long or 50 miles long and you have to camp out overnight, you don't know why animals are there, blah, blah, blah. So what do you do? You hire somebody who's a trail finder or whatever the correct word is. And they know where, they know the shortcuts, they know where the nasty animals are, they know a good place to pitch a tent, et cetera. To me, that's kind of like what a mentor is. So I can choose to have a mentor, I can choose to have a trail finder, or I can just do it myself. If I do it myself, I could make some quite big mistakes. I could find myself halfway up a mountain in a fog and I don't know where the heck I am. And yeah, my phone's run out of battery or whatever. If you've got your trail finder with you, the chance is that they will have encountered the situation before and know a way around it. Right. Thank you so much, Michael, for sharing all the insights with us today. It's super helpful from both your experience of your own personal leadership experience, as well as your experience from coaching and mentoring other people. That's great. Thanks, Bianca. I hope we talk again in the near future. Sounds great. Yeah, thank you so much. I really appreciate it.

How did you learn these three aspects in your career and now how do you help people develop as a coach? Yeah, so it's interesting, you know, people all have their superpowers or strengths that just come naturally and for me I was always an excellent listener and it made me very empathetic to hearing from others and part of that was because naturally I'm an introvert and so I tend to be quiet and I tend to listen especially early on in my career when I wasn't confident in what I was doing. I was certainly strong in driving results, I could get stuff done and I did it very quietly. I did not want to, you know, toot my own horn so I just did my work and assumed that I would be recognized for it which is not always true so and that's the one of the challenges for introverts and the part that I wanted to work on because I didn't feel I was as strong and was on

the vision part and I saw that looking up the leadership chain to see how, you know, in big town halls they would talk about the vision and the changes and so that's where I wanted to focus my time. As I became a people leader I realized, oh no, the vision, yes, I have enough vision or strategic thinking where I really need to focus in it's actually on a strength around empathy and listening for my team to help them grow and develop and that doesn't mean be all nicey-nicey and, you know, everyone loves you and likes you. It's really about understanding the other person and doing the right thing at the right moment. So having tough conversations of giving feedback, for example, at the within the spirit of giving them feedback so that they can grow and develop and as well kind of help them aspire to achieve their greatest potential which can be more on the coaching and the, you know, the guiding and supporting. So using all aspects of that strength I had, you know, around listening and empathy to then direct it to how do I help others with that. Yeah, so it's interesting that you're at first you're going to focus on your, the part you think you lack, the vision part and then you realize it's actually more the strength and the empathy part that's going to be huge in terms of helping your team grow and then achieve the larger results. Is that right? Yeah, yeah. I think it's actually an insight around when you find out you're different from other people which is very early on in life, right? You realize, wow, I should be like those other people. I should in school, I should be raising my hand more. I should be speaking up more, especially when, you know, your teacher says, oh, she's so quiet. And then coming to the realization and I think it just comes from adulthood, from wisdom, from kind of being confident in myself and growing to accept myself to say, no, actually that's a strength and how do I make the most of that strength? But not just be comfortable in my own, you know, my own experience but being able to adjust that to maximize that strength. I'm a big proponent of, I don't know if you're familiar with strength finders and it is, I call it the little book of happiness because if you're using a strength, you are actually, you get into flow much faster. You're in a state where you are doing really great work and you just forget time. And so that same concept can be used as you think about your own kind of personal style, leadership strengths of where are you strong and how do you use more of that because that's when you're going to be in flow. That's when you're going to be most productive. That's when you're going to be most happy. And, you know, yes, you need to develop, you know, areas that you're not strong enough, but don't focus on those. I remember my, when I graduated business school, the head of Shelley Lazarus, the head of Ogilvie, an advertising agency, the thing I remember many, many years ago was she said, hire your weaknesses, right? And so don't like focus on becoming great at your weaknesses. You'll never become great, but hire people who have those strengths in your weaknesses and use your strengths. Yeah, that's very much true. And now, I mean, in your capacity as a coach, how would you guide people in kind of working on the identifying the strength and weaknesses and then working on the strengths? Yeah, I think there's some super simple exercises you can go through. Like just think about in your day, things that you love to do. And it was interesting before when I was working in a tech company, I would color code my meetings and my meetings where I was actually meeting with my team one-on-one or I was developing or coaching, I mentored or coached a lot of people in the organization. I made a green. And every time I looked at my calendar and I saw a green on my calendar, it just made me happy. So I recognize where my energy was. My energy was towards how do I help grow and develop people? And that kind of insight kind of pushed me towards, I want to do more of that. As a people leader, certainly I did that as a leader mentoring others, I certainly did that, but

I wanted to do it more than just part of my job. I wanted to do it as my full time for my job. And that's ultimately when I decided to become a coach where that's what I do day in, day out is helping people grow and develop. So I would recommend just focusing, identifying where your positive energy comes from. And also the flip side where the negative energy comes from, Oh, I got to do my taxes or my expense report or whatever. I actually love doing my expense report because I love the analytical side, but there are things, there are tasks that you just kind of don't want to do. Either you're avoiding it, you're not good at it. It's a growth area. It doesn't mean you don't want to do more of it, but you, or you don't want to grow in that area, but just recognizing where you get your happy day when you're spending doing your day, doing X, Y, or Z and noticing where that energy is coming from and saying, Hey, can I, where can I do, how can I do more of that in my current role? Let alone, are there other roles as I think about my career that I want to do more of that? So having the self-awareness and the self-reflection to, to notice when you're most energized and what, where, where you feel like you're in a flow versus not. Yes. Yeah. Also an interesting exercise is go back to your childhood and say, you know, in grade school, what did you love to do? What made you happiest? And it's amazing. People would say, Oh, I love to do art. And then you ask, do you do art now? No. Like, well, what could you do? That's, you know, art and, Oh, I could take a class or I could actually, you know, think about changing. It doesn't have to be a change of career. It could be, but it, how do you add more to your life around your passion points? Your, the things that you love. That's very good point about these. We actually have some, some of these practice questions on, on the emotions platform, for both non-members and members that they can, as, as a way for them to actually write down these, some of the answers, like when you're most energized, what activities do you enjoy? Or a way for them to help them to develop these self-awareness and in case you need some kind of tool to help you throughout the day. Absolutely. Cause I think people get stuck in, you know, kind of these walls, like, okay, this is my job. And that's the only part that's the only thing I can be doing, but there's so much opportunity within that role to expand doing things that you want to do, let alone a whole different careers out there. And most people think, Oh, you know, I couldn't do that. I won't make enough money. I couldn't do that. I don't have the education. I couldn't do that. I don't have the connections. I won't get paid as much. There's so many barriers that, you know, we put our, put up for ourselves that working through those barriers is a lot easier when you know that that's something you want to do and getting in touch with yourself and to your point, you know, kind of the passions to then enable you, how do I move through that barrier to get to do something I absolutely love.

love to hear a little bit more about your thoughts on what is emotion regulation as you mentioned a little bit in the introduction. And I'm also curious how is emotion regulation different from suppressing emotions, for example? Yeah, happy to answer both of those things, Pian Pian. So here's how I think about things. And this is a pretty simple scheme, but it's one that we found very helpful. So here's the idea. When I started in this field some years ago, the way that people were thinking is really like a list. So they sort of wrote papers and tried to figure out what do people do when they're feeling discouraged or depressed. And it was a great big list. You might talk to your mom, you might throw a pillow, you might go for a run. And there wasn't really a sense of organization or which of these many strategies that are in a big list might work. So what I did was back up a step and said, well, look, how do we think in very simple terms about

emotions unfolding over time? And I'm being very generous with what I mean by emotions. So I would include stress responses and various other affective states in this very broad conception of emotion for today's conversation. So how do emotions unfold? Well, let's start really simply by saying, well, usually there's some kind of situation that has cues that trigger or cause us to pay attention. So there's a situation which we then pay attention to and then think about in certain ways. And we talk about that as an appraisal, a way of thinking about what we're attending to in the situation. And it's that appraisal in our view that leads to an emotion, where an emotion is just a loosely coordinated set of changes in how we feel, our expressive behavior, and our physiological response. So again, just as a really simple scheme, we're thinking that in some situations, we pay attention and then think in certain ways. And that's what gives rise to these responses. Now that's such a simple cartoon, you might think it doesn't do any work for us at all, but here's the work it does. Now that we're thinking about how emotions unfold over time, whether it's anger or happiness, sadness, disgust, all of these, I think, play out in this sequence. There's a situation we can identify, we attend to some features of it, we then think about those features, and that's what leads to the emotion. Here's the work it does for us. If we now want to ask not just how emotions play out in our lives, but what we can do to change how they play out, we can now use that simple scheme for understanding how emotions arise to say, right, we can intervene at one or more of these points in the emotion generative process to modify how the emotions play out. And concretely, we've distinguished five families of regulatory strategies, and they're just connected to different points in that emotion generative process. First step, earliest step, is what we call situation selection. This is just making decisions about what situations we expose ourselves to on the basis of how they're going to make us respond emotionally. So if there's someone who we find really, really upsetting to deal with, and we don't want to have that feeling of being upset, we might avoid that person. It's as simple as that. So that would be an example of situation selection. A second family of emotion regulation processes is what we call situation modification. So now you're in a situation, and is there anything you can do to influence features of that situation so that you no longer have the emotion that you want to not have? So that's situation modification. The third family of regulatory processes, just moving straight down the line, influences the attentional process. And here we're just using attentional deployment as an umbrella term for all the things we can do to shift our attention within a situation. We're not changing the situation. We're not picking a different situation. We're just shifting our attention within the situation. A fourth family of regulatory processes comes to next stage. That's where we're thinking about the situation. And by changing our thinking, that's called cognitive change, we can actually change the emotional impact of the situation. And that's where a lot of our work is focused, because it's a very powerful leverage point. And then the fifth family of regulatory processes is sort of the end of the cycle, where you actually directly modify one or more aspects of emotion. You had asked about suppression. From my perspective, suppression is a form of response modulation, where you work very hard to either not feel or not show what you're feeling. So suppression has a part whole relation to the domain of emotion regulation. Emotion regulation refers to all of these processes, situation selection, situation modification, attention deployment, cognitive change, response modulation. All five of those buckets fit under emotion regulation. Whereas suppression is just an example of one of those from one of those buckets. Piantian, did I put that in a clear way in response to your question? Yes, I think so. Let me try to summarize in the layman's term. So one is, like what kind of situation you want to put yourself

into. Second is to modify the situation if you can. The third is to change your attention, change your attention, right? Yeah, like, see what, what you focus on. And then the fourth is to kind of change your thinking, how you view the situation. And then the fifth is to directly manage the responses that are coming out of all of these processes. Right. Okay. Yeah. Manage your own responses. So yeah, this is very helpful to have the overview of what is emotion regulation, the five stages.

So another topic that I hear often from the community, I'm curious to hear your thoughts on this, Ilana, is how do we handle some tough conversations? So tough conversations could be with coworkers, team members, could be with managers, could be sometimes even with family members and friends. So yeah, curious if you have any thoughts on this. Okay, so, okay, I'm gonna be a little bit philosophical here. So, you know, I don't wanna say there's no such thing as tough or not tough or tough, easy or good, bad, whatever, right? Yeah. Because, you know, it's a perception, you know what I mean? What's tough for one person is not really tough for the other person, right? And so it's kind of hard to view it this way, right? I mean, everybody has tough conversations or the way they perceive them to be as tough, right? The thing is you have to understand that is your perception and reframe it, right? Reframe it in your mind. And as soon as that mindset shift happens, it's no longer a dreadful conversation, it's more of an educational conversation, right? This is a conversation now about you, about your core, about you communicating your core, right? And about communicating your beliefs, right? And it's about getting buy-in and clarity with the person that you're communicating with. So first things to do is make sure that you get rid of the word tough, right? And I mean, again, you don't wanna like say it's not there. I mean, it's obviously there, these are your feelings, you absolutely should acknowledge that, but reframe it into more something that's productive, right? Something that you're able to resolve, right? A tough conversation is a conversation regardless, right? So treat it as a conversation, but you still have to shift how you feel about it, right? Sometimes, like I said, if you're preparing for a tough conversation, maybe it's a centering exercise, or maybe it's a meditation that gets you out of your head and out of your feelings and helps you center as you approach that. So you're approaching it more from the pragmatic balanced standpoint, right? Versus from an emotional, because ultimately when we react with emotion, we're not in control. When you want to have a tough conversation, you wanna be a really clear of mind and you want to have control over your thought process, right? And over your emotions, right? And you want to make sure that you're able to communicate clearly, not emotionally driven. I mean, the thing with tough conversations frequently, they come out with a burst and we then run out and then we regret everything we've done, right? So the point is that you have to approach any conversations like that with respect for yourself and your opponent. I may call that person that, right? Or the person that you're going to have the tough conversation with. So first and foremost, like I said, refrain, right? Then for yourself, decide what is it that you stand for and what is important to you? Like, where are your values in that, right? The tough conversation is obviously happening because there's some form of a disagreement where there is clearly not an alignment. Maybe it's not an alignment on values, maybe it's not alignment on direction, action, whatever it might be, right? The point is that there's a misalignment. So you have to be real clear as to what's important for you and how important is that for you. I mean, is this something that you're willing to negotiate or is this something that is absolutely 100% what it is? So that's

great. So now you're real clear on what you want and what is negotiable and what's not. So then you're proceeding with actually communicating the truth. And that is the hardest thing to do because we're most afraid as people of rejection. And again, this is a very primitive fear, right? Because if we're rejected, we're no longer part of the community. So we don't survive, we die, and that's the end, right? So it's understanding that that's where this is coming from, right? So, and bringing it back to communicating your truth, it's entirely possible that you will disagree, but it will not be the end of the world, right? Otherwise this would be a negotiable thing, right? So if something's not negotiable, you have to communicate your truth and you have to do it with the most empathetic way. Sometimes you have to say no to somebody, right? And it's a no and then this is it. And just respect that, but you can communicate that and in the most compassionate way, right? You don't need to just cut somebody off and be that, right? The point is you still have to validate the other person's feelings if you wanna continue that relationship, right? So this is what we're talking about. The relationship is super important. Find the positive ways in that, right? So, okay, so you disagree with this, this is your authentic response. You said that this is this way, right? You communicated this empathetically and then allow for that person to respond. I mean, give the person the capability to feel all the feels, right? And acknowledge that and be okay with that, right? Because we usually blow right past that and because we just can't deal with other people's emotions because, oh my God, like I don't know how to deal with this, right? So allow for that space and prepare for that ahead of time. Pause, literally just pause and allow the person to react, right? Whatever the person says to you, whatever they will say, and most likely they will acknowledge their frustration or maybe disagreement or whatever. And then at that point, I mean, this is something you certainly have to do a little bit ahead of time. Think about what you can offer instead. Is there something you can offer instead? Maybe you don't want to collaborate with somebody on something, but maybe there's another way somebody can make a valuable contribution because if they wanted to work with you or they wanted to do something with you, they're obviously expressing an effort, which is not aligning with you over here. But think about where would you align and communicate that alignment to that person simply because it may not be over here, but it may be over here. And allow for that opportunity to continue the relationship. So you're not cutting off the opportunity to interact, right? But you're looking for a future in or a future collaboration. And I mean, sometimes people might surprise you. So you want to give that opportunity. You want to think about where else might this work or how else might this work? I mean, maybe if it's a relationship with your spouse, we're so comfortable in just cutting things off, but hold on for a minute and evaluate what would work, right? Propose something, right? And I think that will go a long way. I mean, if this is a professional relationship, think of how else you can collaborate. I mean, what else can you do? Maybe you have an introduction to somebody or maybe it's a small project that this person can do for you. So allow for that. And you will be surprised how grateful people will be that you gave them the honest opinion, but you see them as valuable, right? So offering them some kind of value, right? Even though it may not be the right fit right here, right now, but you're doing something here will go a very long way. So I think that's probably the way to go. I mean, does that make sense? There was a really long explanation here. So. I think it's super valuable. Let me kind of summarize the steps that someone can take away as like actionable steps. Like one is make sure your self is like centered and you can do that by possibly like meditation out of way that like help yourself to get calm before you get into a conversation. And then kind of like

change your mindset and say like, okay, it's a conversation. Don't presumably say like it's going to be tough. It might not be, or even if it is, it's okay. It's an opportunity, right? It's an opportunity to change your thoughts. And it's also opportunity for you to voice your truth. So, yeah. That's right, yeah. And then during the conversation, kind of like give the other person a chance to express their feelings, if there's feeling there and acknowledge that if needed. And also take it as a way to find a middle ground if you have kind of misalignment and then find a way to get middle ground there. Did I? And search for an opportunity to do something forward. So you're not just finding the middle ground, but you're also, because sometimes there may not be a middle ground. I mean, in relationships, maybe it's more so, but in more professional relationships, it's finding for another opportunity. And I mean, again, if such does not exist, maybe it's a different introduction. So that's great summary. Thank you.

a work with on my clients to be able to come up with the ability to communicate your value and to articulate your differential, it really boils down to five steps. So the first one, I think the first two are kind of blended together and that's to be able to have words to describe who you are as a leader. And in two key areas, one is knowing your core values because that's really in essence words that describe who you are, like passionate, like disciplined, like high integrity, things like that would be descriptions of core values. And then the second piece is really being able to name your core strengths. I actually like to call them your superpowers, which are really these elevated short list of the things that you're really good at and that give you energy when you're doing them. So knowing your values and naming your strengths is necessary in order to get to the third step, which is being able to have a framework to define your, what I call your value prop or your brand statement. And so that's a framework that I help my clients to build out for themselves that really summarizes in one sentence who they are professionally, like I'm a passionate sales executive, for example. What they do, and this is a big one because people get a little vague typically, but being able to really articulate what it is that you do as in this example, a sales professional. So that might be driving revenue, that might be increasing market share, that might be customer or partner satisfaction. So really getting clear on what is it that the impact is that you bring. And then the last part of the sentence is the how you do it, you know, collaborative partnerships or an epic attention to detail. So basically you're customizing in one sentence this value prop for yourself. And so that's another step in the process. The other thing that I do work with clients on that is huge, that would be step four, is really understanding many of those key things that diminish your confidence. This is something that comes up for a lot of people because they may know their strengths, they may know their value and their value prop and have that written for themselves, but they feel like they are an imposter. So imposter syndrome comes up, or maybe they're really worried about the competition. And so they kind of have a fear underneath it of looking like a fool or looking stupid. And so they may resist or kind of back off or even not be able to communicate themselves with confidence because there's some worries in the back of their mind. So really having some skills or tools to be able to know why this is happening and what to do about it is huge. And then the last piece of course is being able to just have a script. Like this is what I realized with a lot of clients, even those at super high levels in organization, directors, general managers, et cetera, is that sometimes it's not knowing who they are or even how value prop, they just don't know what to say in a interview conversation or a networking conversation. So having some sample scripts is huge. And then,

you know, last thing that I would say about the whole process is practice makes perfect. So having someone, I mean, this happens a lot. Like you think you have it perfectly scripted out for yourself, but there's a very different thing when you actually are saying it out loud to someone that really elevates it. So having a trusted colleague, a mentor, a best friend that you can practice what you're saying and get trusted and safe feedback is incredibly, incredibly helpful. So that's kind of at a glance, the quick process that helps people really be able to get to the place where they can really confidently voice their value. Thank you. That sounds like a really good process. So I like the five steps and kind of start with understanding and having the awareness of who you are, what your core value and you're passionately about, and then being able to summarize it and then practice it with colleagues and friends. Yeah. This is the piece that is important with the values and the strengths is those are your differentiators. Sometimes what I find that a lot of leaders that I work with do is they end up kind of blending themselves in using a lot of corporate lingo. And that may be easy to do because it's like, oh, I'm a strategic leader driving success. You know what I mean? But the problem is that when you're using a lot of corporate lingo, then it ends up kind of just blending and blurring into what everybody else says too. And so that's why it's really powerful to know, have some really core words that are true for you because it really differentiates you and you can build that into your value prop. That's a great point. And I like your part about practice makes perfect. Part of what we're building in Emotions is create a community and a platform for people to practice with each other. So you can also get like feedback from the community members not just your friends and colleagues or if you want more honest feedback from everyone else. Yeah. That is one of the biggest things that my clients tell me because I too have a group format in when I'm working with clients and some of the most powerful feedback that they get is from their peers just like what you've heard.

Change management is actually a common topic that I heard that are challenges that leaders face in different organizations. I'm curious what kind of changes have you seen your clients or people have gone through. Some challenges that I have heard including, for example, changes that come with a high growth startup or changes that come with a large corporation that's undergoing restructuring leadership change or strategy change. In that case, what are the suggestions you have for leaders who are going through those? Change is inevitable and it is also really difficult. It's difficult to lead change. It's difficult to manage change. Just those things that you were mentioning about startups or mergers or things like that. But when you think about how the world has changed even recently, think about COVID and how that has brought such a different dimension into the workplace. Being in the federal government for many years, we were required to come in the office every day. It was an 8 o'clock to 4 30 job and we had meetings. We collaborated with our colleagues. Our boss was accessible to us. Then all of a sudden things started to change a little bit. The workplace started to change. We had younger people coming into our workforce which brought a brand new dynamic. People who grew up only on the internet. That's all they know. The iPhones and the iPads and things like that. The way they communicate through Twitter and Insta and all those platforms. At work, we had to change our ways of communication before. Remember those days of we actually picked up a phone? Now it's about teams and about chatting and about Slack. The way that we work has changed and who we work with has changed because we really are in this now telework environment where what we're doing right now is the norm. Even though leaders and executives

are excited about the workplace, the workforce coming back to the workplace, the workforce isn't as excited. When you add all of that onto where we are in our society, where we are with what's happening in the world, I call, and this is not a term that I coined, but we're living in this VUCA world, volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous. It really takes a special leader and an organization who embraces change to really have the skills that they need to be able to do this. It's very complicated and complex. That's right. What are the skills and capabilities do leaders need to go through? Well, it is about understanding that they do live in this complex world and that things are not going to go back the way they were. I think that that is sometimes difficult for leaders who are comfortable with leading the way they did. What it requires is a leader, is a leader, an executive who is, first of all, open to change, but also understands how others may be feeling about change. What I found over the years is that people are reluctant to change. Even though we know it's good for business, we know that we have to stay fresh. We constantly have to be innovating and changing, but our ability to change is actually resistance because our brains crave certainty. Our brains crave peace and calm. When things start to become volatile, a leader needs to be able to recognize in their people that there's something deeper going on. And so I feel that one of the biggest skills that a leader and executive can possess is about emotional intelligence. I know a lot of people are like, well, that's something that's been around for years. Why do I need to do it? Or even they think that they are, but what I'm talking about is our ability to connect to other people, the people on their workforce or their clients or their customers. Are they picking up on these emotional social cues? Are they really understanding how people are feeling? Because sometimes we make decisions and people are, you know, we think that they're going along with us and all of a sudden we're caught off guard because emotion happens. So when you're saying to people, we need to change, oftentimes what I hear is change is hard because it requires everybody to change. People see it as not always being better. You know, that's change is because for change sake. So it's not always viewed as positive. It's not always viewed as something that, you know, is welcomed. People can see change as confusing. They can see it as a threat. They can see it as what I'm not good enough, or we weren't good enough that we have to change. So, and it could also create like a perceived or actual loss to people. I'm losing something that I valued. So I feel that where emotional intelligence comes in is that we have, we have empathy and compassion for others. We use it to connect to people and to ask them how they really are doing and to understand why do they feel the way they do? And then finally, once you have all that information is how do we now manage that emotion in myself? Because I might want people to change, get frustrated. And how do I stay open and able to really go deeper with people to connect to those people? So I think that that is one of many. There's others as well that go with change management. What does an executive have to possess? So to summarize, one is to be open to changes. The second is to be attuned to how other people feel about changes and pay attention to their emotions and have empathy and how to like connect deeper with them in the emotional level. Right. Exactly. Because when you do that, it really does help people realize that you care about them and that when you focus on what other people value, what their values are, and you get to know them, then you start to then realize that you can engage them and motivate them through what's important to them. So for an example, coming back to work, I may be very hesitant because I've gotten used to the flexibility and you're taking that away from me now. Now, if I know that flexibility is important to you as a leader, I will talk about this, like how can we make this work?

And so it is really about honing in your skills to connect to other people, to understand them, and then to move them through their values, not cramming your own values or your own ideas down their throat, so to speak. It's really about listening too.

I've mentioned before and it's so worth repeating. These four hard skills of emotional intelligence, they're pretty simplistic, but the challenge for all of us, and this is certainly true for me, is to show these skills in real time, not in a presentation on Zoom, you know, in your life, at a really high level of expertise, where it's a stressful situation, and to do that consistently. I like that. I set that challenge out for myself. I know I'll never do it, but it's always worth trying, because, you know, once you say something or do something, it's so hard to unravel that and take it back. And when I fail, which I fail like multiple times today, that's when an apology comes in, and I'll just say, I'm really sorry. You know, I'm tired today, or just, I have no excuse. I have no excuse. I just couldn't do it today, and I apologize if I really messed up. I used to look at this and also, it just makes me feel even more anxious or frustrated with myself, because I think for me, this may help you as well, that I see this as, you know, here's the ideal, right? Here's perfection, and I'm never going to hit that. So, what a bummer that is, right? But for me, I like to think about, well, wait a minute. Given my background and who I am and how my own temperament, I should be here, and every day that I could do a little better, I should be proud of that. So, I remind myself of that, and it's a really good motivator. So, don't hold yourself up to the ideal or the perfect, because we're not going to get there. It's worth trying, but we're going to fail. And when you do, just pick yourself up, dust yourself off, and just say, I'm glad I tried at least. I'm glad I tried. So, with that, I hope that you can leverage some of these things, whether it's the real how are you conversation, when you get that answer, to just try to feel what that person feels, make the connection, ask them what's going on, engage in one or more of those emotion management strategies. Try it. It won't be perfect, but it'll be, I think it'll be enormously helpful to apply these skills. And we call it our emotional intelligence blueprint. Simple and simplistic, but try it. How do you feel? How do you feel? And others, and ask them, don't assume you know. Match those feelings to connect and match the emotions to get the work done. Okay, what words exactly describe these things and what caused them? How might they change? And then constantly you're moving emotions, because emotions are movement. How do you stay open to these things? Instead of squashing them and controlling them and tightly regulating them, because emotions give meaning to us, emotions can help us think, emotions define the essence of our humanity.

So I know that coaching is a hot buzzword that's around in the leadership development space and has been around for a really long time. We have fitness coaches, we have nutrition coaches, we have career coaches, and it can get really overwhelming. And we also have athletic coaches. And so for me, I like to start by kind of explaining coaching, what it is and how it's different from maybe therapy and consulting. I think that those two kind of get a little bit confused. But coaching is really a partnership. You know, you go to a therapist when there are things that may have happened in your past that you want to spend time unpacking to really understand why it happened, really dig into the emotions of why it happened, so that you can cope better in the present and think about different strategies so that if that thing that triggered you emotionally or mentally comes up again, you're prepared. Coaching on the other hand,

really has this future facing lens. And so for me, I'm a leadership and career coach. So when I'm thinking about the future with my clients, it's like, okay, well, where do you want to go in your career? How do you want to best position yourself? What does leadership really mean for you? How are you showing up as a leader now? And how do you want to be showing up as a leader in the future? So that's the main distinction between like coaching and therapy. And then we think about coaching and consulting, usually you hire a consultant when you have a big problem that you can't solve on your own, right? So you get an expert so that they can come in and tell you what to do. Coaching again, is about a partnership, and recognizing that the client is the one who is the master or the expert in their own lived experiences. And through that partnership of working with a coach, you got to kind of dig out that expertise, they dig out that wisdom that they already have to get the answers for getting to that future state that we described. So it's really about partnership, it's really about accountability, it's really about that action planning.

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of talk about burnout these days. What kind of suggestions do you have for these people? If you're incorporating the coaching angle in this context? Yeah, there's a lot to dig into around burnout around energy management. Well, first thing is that I don't think enough people talk about and think about energy management, right? We kind of focus on time management. But rarely do we stop and say, well, how am I feeling like in my body throughout the day? Like, what do I need? Am I hungry? Do I need to run to the bathroom? Do I need to stretch? Right? Learning what those cues are, bringing awareness to what those cues are, really helps us to combat burnout before it even happens. And we only learn through that awareness. So, you know, some people get headaches when they have too much on their plate. They get, you know, these feelings in their stomach, they get backaches. How are we responding to those natural signals that are showing up for us and either being proactive, or being really intentional about taking that those moments to pause to take care of ourselves. So, you know, often people think about burnout as just like, you know, you go, go, go, and then boom, it's done. And then you don't even realize you're burnt out until you're resting. So for me, and the work that I do with my clients, it's really about how are you nourishing yourself in those micro moments throughout the day? How are you really using your evenings? How are you really using your weekends? How are you, you know, pre planning longer breaks, so that you're constantly thinking about those things that nourish you not only the basic needs for your body, you know, like food, sleep, but also taking time to read, taking time to spend time with friends, like those things also help to energize us and refuel us. So a it's awareness, B, it's thinking about, okay, what are the things that I really need to help me stay at my optimal energy levels? And am I and then see, it's like, well, how am I intentionally building that into my life so that I'm constantly refilling my cup and not pouring from an empty cup. And I think the last thing is just really owning our boundaries. Energy management, well being comes down to giving ourselves permission to say no, right? No to email on the weekends, if that's the thing, right? No to being connected on your vacation, no to that extra project, because the whole the quality of your work as a whole will diminish, because you take in on this other thing. So really owning that, you know, the quality of your work, the quality of your life experiences comes down to thinking about that balance and enacting that balance that will really support you on a day to day and longer term, it's just a

more sustainable option. And I know that, you know, people are probably listening and just like, Oh, man, but I just can't I have to just keep on going, right? Because so many of us have been kind of groomed to and shaped to keep on chugging along until we reach that moment of burnout. And those cycles of just like, forcing, forcing, forcing burnout, and then the recovery time from burnout, and then like going back again, it's time for us to break the loop. You know, companies are really thinking about this differently. We've seen what's happened with the great resignation. So it's time for us to also give ourselves permission to change the way that we work as well, as our organizations shift, and really start to prioritize energy management and self care, because it is a more sustainable option for their employees, like America is a bit behind when you look at other countries in Europe, who, you know, are really thoughtful about, you know, four day work weeks, or, you know, longer parental leaves, these sorts of things that are so important for us to adapt into American culture as well, not only for the well being of businesses, but for the well being of humans, humans who come to work and the pandemic has shown us that like people really drive businesses. So it's so important for us to take care of our people. That's right. Yeah, I think it's it's all very good points in terms of kind of being attentive to the signals that we get from our body and putting time to, to recharge and not getting just keep going and working and not taking any break.

Back to the context of in the pandemic and remote work, how would you suggest someone to give feedback? Is it in the middle of the meeting or via chat, via email? What is a good way? Well, I would not do it by email. That's the worst way because it turns out that email cuts out probably 90% of the information that face-to-face provides. We don't get, even if we have these emojis and so on, we don't get a lot of the feelings in it. It's so easy to misunderstand. It causes confusion. You don't want to do email. Phone is better, but it's not great. Face-to-face, of course, is the best way to do it. So now in a meeting, it depends on the culture of the group. There are some groups, and I've been in some, where I can stop and I can say, hey, I'm really bothered by what you just said. There are other times in which we sort of, we say, hey, that's not an appropriate comment, or I don't like that comment. But we may need to talk to the person afterwards. We need to say, hey, I really felt shut down three times at the meeting today, and I don't like it. And it's not helping us working together. What's going on? I might do that one-on-one afterwards. So we've got to be careful until you build a culture where this is normal in a meeting, that you pick the time, you pick the place. I may not want to make that conversation to Hall right afterwards. I may want to say, hey, Mary, let's go in this office. I need to talk to you for a few minutes and have some privacy to do it. So we pick the time and pick the place. But if it really bothers you, I wouldn't sit on it because you're going to be on guard the next time you're in a meeting with her. What if it's a positive feedback and you do that in the meeting? Praise someone in public? Now, that's much easier to say, hey, I really appreciate the thoroughness of the work in this report. You've really gone out of your way, or I really appreciate that you took account of what I needed. Or you've been very succinct in the answers you've given. Or you've really shown all the downside risks. Yeah, I think in a meeting, I'd want to point out frequently what they're doing. Now, the trouble is that we often don't do that because we're afraid the other person will think we're trying to butter them up. But if we give positive feedback, it's easier to give them. You would use the word negative. We say developmental. We say there's no such thing as negative feedback because if it's on behavior, anybody can change

behavior. So it's developmental. It always implies they can be better. That, for me, is not negative. That's great. I'll keep that in mind. I'll say developmental feedback.

Hello, everyone. My name is Pian Pian. I'm the founder and CEO of Emotions. Emotions is a platform to help organizations transform by instilling new habits with immediate feedback and insights from experts and interactive practices. We're very happy and excited today to have Nicole here. Nicole was a former chief investment officer at Techstars, and she's one of the founding members of Techstars. And she's now an executive coach and leadership coach, besides still investing and doing other wonderful things. Nicole, we're so grateful to have you here. Thanks for having me. I appreciate it. Anything else you would like to add to the introduction? No, maybe just a correction in that chief investment strategy officer at Techstars, we actually have a different chief investment officer. He's still there. My partner, or I guess ex-partner now, Jason Seitz. And he's doing a great job over there. So the company's in good hands. That's great. Yeah. OK. Yeah. Thank you for the correction. Nicole, since you have been working with founders for so many years and you've been coaching them and now you're also doing coaching again, I'm curious, what are the most common challenges you see founders and leaders that you interact with and coach face? Oh, my gosh, there's so many. I think that one that comes to the top of my mind is just not enough time in the day. People struggle with just how to pack it all in. Right. And I think the trick to that is a little reframing on time. What I often say is money is actually a renewable resource. You can get more of it. Almost everything in your company you can get more of is a renewable resource. Time is the only thing that isn't renewable. And so being as as like obsessive about how you spend your time and what you spend it on is is a is a is the way to actually create more time. And and so it involves a few things. Right. It involves learning how to prioritize, making sure that you're you're spending time on the right stuff. There's a people can find themselves busy, but not productive. And it's learning to be really productive. It's also learning how to avoid problems in the first place. And so spending the time up front to to invest in the right things will actually lead to you spending less time on that thing later on versus ignoring it and waiting until it catches fire. And so there's there's some techniques around how to do all that. But I would just say time is probably the one that I hear the most. And from that stems a whole bunch of other problems like stress and anxiety and like, you know, just hiring and all of these other things that kind of come up when when you're not spending time on the right stuff. Yeah, that's very much true. I personally experienced that. And I hear from a lot of the leaders, founder and director, there's not enough time of the day. What what kind of prioritization frameworks and strategy do you recommend for people when they face this challenge? Well, there is. Well, so first of all, there's a book that I love, and this isn't exactly answering the question that you asked, but but it sort of leads to it. One of my favorite books that I always recommend founders is a book called The Four Disciplines of Execution. 40X is the nickname for it. You might hear us refer to 40X, but four disciplines of execution is the name of the book. And it's I like to put it I think it's actually one of the most powerful tools. It's better than OKRs. It's better than goal setting. It's better than all of these other things. And the reason is because it it forces you to get crystal clear on what your priorities are in order for you to actually execute on them. And then there is a methodology of how to go about executing so that you're making sure that you're spending your your time on the things that matter, rather than sort of getting caught up in the whirlwind of our day to day, which

we all do. Right. Like you can sit there and spend four hours a day in your email just knocking out your email. But the end of the day, what did you actually get done? And so I really like the 40X model because it forces you to get crystal clear and actually articulate in a certain way. And actually, the way that they that they the way that they oriented is from X to Y by when. And so where am I now from X to Y? Where do I want to go? By when? By what date? And you have to put in metrics. Right. And so it really just forces you and you're only allowed one of them at a time. And so it forces you get really, really crystal clear. There's some other frameworks that I like to around how to look forward, not backward, how to focus on solutions, not problems. There are some things like that that I really like putting priorities through lenses, but it really depends on each startup and what's going on with each particular company and what's going on with each particular founder. Sometimes you actually have to clean up a bunch of problems in order to be able to look forward. And sometimes that is actually very difficult because you have to really get to the root of the problem. And often in early stages, the root of the problem tends to be personality conflicts with founders. And so it's a lot of like looking inward and then and then getting very inquisitive on what their strengths and weaknesses are. And sometimes that can be that's hard work. Right. So. So anyway, that was kind of a long way of saying there's lots of there are different approaches and kind of give you one of my favorites, but also it's really dependent on the company.

A lot of people asked how to listen with empathy. Listen with empathy is to focus on the person that we are talking to. We can pay attention to the person's words and also the person's facial expressions, voice and tone, and body language. We try to understand the person's feelings, sometimes not expressed in words. If we are getting emotional ourselves, we can take a deep breath, pause, and then listen and talk again. If it doesn't work, we can ask for a quick break and then come back to the meeting. After the person stops talking, we can also summarize what we heard and ask, this is what I heard, is that correct? To see if we can understand fully. You can also practice loving kindness meditation to get into a compassionate mindset. Stay tuned for the next video on loving kindness meditation.

So here's the how are you question. The other reason I think a lot of us don't answer that how are you question with any degree of specificity is because we like the language, right? Like, I'm feeling kind of, you know, oh yeah, yeah, I kind of know. So again, for years, starting about 25 years ago, actually I put this up, I used to call it a mood meter and just say, indicate how much energy you have, zero to 10 and how pleasant you're feeling, zero to 10. Give me those numbers. It doesn't work very well anymore because we're so complicated. And that I just ask which of these words or other words describe how you're feeling. Yeah, I'll give you an example. You know, for now for me, I'm interested to see how this goes. I'm pretty thoughtful. I'm hopeful that this goes well, but I am definitely worried, tense and anxious because I so desperately want this to go well. So I have that little bit of anxiety. So do consider this without overwhelming that other person, just ask in a way, how are you really? This is skill number one. Now, why does it matter? Here's something else that's counterintuitive. So skill one of four, now that you know how you are and how that other person is, let's say there's just two of you, do your current feelings help you? Do they match the task? Do they match the other person? Will you emotionally connect with people? So in this model, this is really simple. So we miss some

complexities here, but it's hard to do this in real time. So here's a quick example. We know that people who are sad, not depressed, are a little bit better at finding details or focusing on details or finding errors in a document. I mean, think about it for yourself. You know, this happens to me where I'm thinking, oh, I've got a presentation tomorrow and I have a great idea. This brilliant idea, I'm super energized, feeling really great. I'm in that joyous creative mode and I put in a new slide and it's great. And then it's 7.30 in the morning, I have the presentation and I show the slide. It's like, uh-oh, that doesn't belong there or there's typos there. So the matching idea is, now that you know how you're feeling, that other person's how they're doing, do these emotions help? Do they facilitate your thinking? And the other piece is, let's say you do have a friend who, this has probably happened to you, you're really dying to talk to this person about what's going on. And you're having some difficulties in your life and they say, hey, how you doing? Everything good? It's kind of hard to then say, well, not really. So you wanna pick up on those signals and then match that initial feeling that's a real connection. That's the essence of our humanity. It also means it's kind of hard to do. Skill number three. Okay, now that you've figured this out, I'm saying I'm kind of a little anxious, but also kind of curious and I'm matching that other person, tell me what's going on. Like, where's this coming from? How might your feelings change? Psychologists call it athletic change. How might your feelings change? Psychologists call it affective forecasting. I call it an emotional what if analysis. In the workplace, pretty straightforward. Have you ever heard someone say, hey, what's on TAFRA this afternoon? Oh, end of the year performance review with so-and-so. Oh, yeah, all right, well, good luck with that. And the other person says, well, no, he won't be surprised at this negative feedback. And I like the phrase that person should not be surprised. It usually means it's gonna be a big surprise. So how about a little forecasting about how that's gonna go and a little preparation. It doesn't take a lot, but it's enormously helpful. So the fourth skill, the fourth skill is really key. It's moving emotions. Emotions are always in motion. And so you're moving these things in real time. Stuff is changing. And so I just wanna be thinking about how do you manage those feelings to maximize, in this case, engagement today in our time together? Like, what are you gonna do? And for our time together, I think it's most helpful to be in this little lower energy is fine, but pleasant, thoughtful, considering things. So how do you get there if you're not? How do you stay there if you are? That's an interesting question. So I'm gonna work at this, right? I'm gonna try to keep you engaged and keep you focused. But like any interaction, it takes more than one person. So for me, I've turned my email off. I've put my phone someplace, can't see it. And I also feel, I definitely have a sense of obligation that I feel that I'm trying to remind myself. I've done this before, but this is new to you. And so I have this obligation to you to not just mail it in, but to be really present and focused on making sure that I can do the best job possible. So with that, that's what we mean by emotional intelligence. I sometimes call it the ability model of emotional intelligence or emotional intelligence. sellingoutforward.com

Kira, since you're originally from Ireland and you worked in London, and I mean, you also have worked with colleagues around the globe and you have led projects in Japan and US and other countries. What are your thoughts on how someone can collaborate best with people from diverse backgrounds, diverse cultures, and if you're a leader of a team that has people who's been across the globe, how would you suggest someone to cultivate the best performing teams? Yeah, so look, there's a few things here. One is, which I think is really important, is to

document requirements carefully. So, and I mean, write them down, you know, electronically, whatever, record them or something. It's very common for people to be using the same words to mean something completely different. And if you don't document your requirements using some kind of technical language, it's very easy to be at cross purposes. I thought you meant that, I thought you meant that, I thought you meant that. For example, in some cultures, it's very difficult for individuals in those cultures to say no. You know, will this piece of the project be finished by Friday? Yeah. Right. Now, that actually means no. And, but it's very difficult in some cultures to openly say no. So, you know, so how do you, how do you give people the chance to, without using the word no, let you know that the target won't be met or that there's a, is there a problem? Like, is, the problem is very difficult in some cultures, they say no, there's not a problem, they say no, there's not a problem. Why, why would there be a problem? Well, there's a problem because these two people are at SIC and they're really important to the project. Oh, yeah, well, yeah, you know. So I think it's important to, you know, carefully document decisions, carefully document roles and responsibilities. That's the one thing I tend to do very early in any project or any program is to focus on roles and responsibilities and make it crystal clear what I'm responsible for, what you're responsible for, down to a quite a level of detail. So we'll never have a situation where I'm saying, I thought you were doing that. And you're looking at me going, Mike, I thought you were doing that. So documenting roles and responsibilities, documenting requirements, documenting decisions, and documenting risks. So this is something that this is something that I focused on quite a lot of my career. And I was, I was, I was, yeah, I had a number of senior roles in technology risk management. And some regard this as a science, some regarded as a craft, some regarded as an art. I'm trying to be more of the science end of the spectrum and have people think about risk, especially people think about risks in very different ways. Like, for example, you know, sort of a physical one in, you know, in when I was working in Japan, there were earthquakes all the time, and most of them quite minor, but like, you know, your, your PC would move on the desk and, you know, I was like, oh my God, you know, it's frightened your life out of you, right? Whereas, you know, a person sitting beside me just wouldn't, wouldn't even think about it, right? And they know that there's a risk of a big earthquake sometime and all that, but they adjust their lives and adjust their, their, you know, their, their cognition to fit in with that model. So I, I usually use a very simple, I do two things. One is that I use a very simple model to describe the risk, which is like, works in every language. Question one, what is the impact if this risk happens? What is the impact of the project, the program, the department, the company? You know, an example of a big impact would be, let's imagine an oil tanker crashes and there's a huge oil spillage. Massive ecological impact, massive reputational impact for the company, danger to, to animals, danger to life, et cetera, huge impact. And then the other question that I ask, and these are really good questions because you, you know, every culture has got the sense of frequency of the risk and impact of the risk. So the second one is frequency. How often does this thing happen? And then you take those two axes and you say, okay, the things that are in the top right of that quadrant are things that have huge impact and they happen quite often. They're red. They're things that you need to take action on immediately. If you look at things that happen frequently, but they have low impact, that's amber. That's something you have to monitor and manage however it's appropriate. Things that have a big impact, sorry, things that have happened frequently, but have a low impact. I'm not sure if I said those in the right order, but anyway, you know, you know

what I mean? They are, they're also amber, things that need to be managed. And then things that are low frequency, they hardly ever happen. And then when they do happen, there's low impact. They're green. Generally speaking, I wouldn't bother too much about those things. So, but this is a very good way, you know, in a cross-cultural way, because everybody knows what those concepts mean. It doesn't matter if you're in the middle of Africa and, you know, your risks are about, you know, crops not coming up or, you know, whatever, you know, flying animals eating the crops or whatever. It doesn't matter where you are in the world, you still have to deal with risk. And that's, that's a good, that's a good language to deal with risk, is to think about frequency and think about impact. And then you document that. And then you document the steps. And you do that in a, in as wide a way as possible. So, I'm very much against the concept of having a risk manager, you know, on a team. It's fine to have a risk manager as someone who pulls all the stuff together, but I'm a big advocate of what I call open risk management. It's like open source. It's like everybody gets a chance to raise their hand and say, I see this risk. And in opposition to having the single risk manager, this idea says, actually, everybody's responsible for risk management. Because in the old paradigm, it was like, this one person's responsible for risk management, and everyone else is responsible for doing the work. That the open, the open or syndicated risk management makes everybody responsible. And it's not everybody and nobody, it's everybody. Right. So, what I hear is when you work with people from different cultures and different native languages and different backgrounds, it's important to have set set expectations and requirements and standards, and preferably in a written form where everyone can review and agree upon and rose and responsibilities, even before the start of the project. So, to minimize misunderstanding, so that things can go more smoothly. Yeah, yeah, that's, that's right. And that's not, I think if you look in the literature, at the moment, like leadership literature or something, one of the new trends is to talk about like embracing ambiguity. Well, that's all fine. If you start off in a position where everybody sort of agrees with where we're starting off with. But often, if you're dealing with global teams and global mindsets and global cultures, you're not starting off with the same mindset, you're not starting off in the same place. So, you know, having this concept of like, oh, let's all embrace ambiguity. Put a big mess. In my opinion. Right. Yeah, that's a very good point. And also... Yeah, I mean, something Alcon used.

What's your thoughts on how to reduce unconscious bias? You're a female entering leader and that's kind of probably not the most common. So yeah, curious to hear your thoughts. Yeah, yeah. So, unconscious bias is a real challenge, right? Because obviously we don't recognize we're doing it. Maybe like 20, 30 years ago, you would have said, oh yeah, they definitely knew they were being had bias, right? But today it's like so much more subtle and it's ingrained in us, right? And when it's ingrained in our subconscious, it shows up in a lot of different ways. So let me just use an example. So when it comes to hiring, if you just set up interviews with people, like the candidate has an interview with like a couple of engineers and then the CTO, right? If those interviews are just show up and you ask whatever questions you wanna ask in the moment, like they're not scripted, they're not planned, then what happens is our unconscious bias jumps in and it's proven. There's studies out there that say, if you left to your own devices, men will ask men candidates easier questions and they will ask women candidates harder questions, right? And so it's just because you're building a rapport with someone who's like you,

right? And so when there's someone who's like you, your bias is low, but when it's someone who like is not like you, your biases are high, right? So instead of just having ad hoc interviews, you can actually have scripted interviews. It's very common. You decide what questions you're gonna ask in each interview. And even the act of asking the questions in the same order removes bias. If you like pick and choose from a list of questions and ask them in a different order to each candidate, you're injecting bias because you might ask some candidates the easy questions first and other candidates the hard questions first. So like you always want a scripted interview. You wanna ensure that the questions you're asking are aligned to the skills of the role, right? And you wanna make sure that each interview that candidates have at the same interview stage are running exactly the same way, right? And if you script it out, you're removing as much of the bias as you can, right? And then the other place that bias comes in in the hiring process is in our decision-making. Well, are you a thumbs up or a thumbs down on that candidate, right? Like how often have you seen that? I'm a thumbs up on, who's a thumbs up? You know, and all the, all half the people give thumbs up or whatever, right? What you really wanna do is have a scorecard that says, okay, this candidate's skills, technical skills, rating them on a scale of one to five. Their, you know, leadership skills ranked one to five. And then be able to justify why, right? When you have a scorecard, you're actually removing that, that more of that bias that just says, oh, I liked that candidate, so let's hire them, right? Yeah, yeah. That's a good way to do it, kind of more, add more rationality and have people to reason and explain how they choose certain things. How about- It's the same thing as we were talking about before. It's like that consistent cadence, putting that system in place so that you can just show up to an interview and ask the questions. You don't have to decide, what are we gonna ask this candidate, right? How about during the, just after someone has been hired, when people are working in a company, how do you reduce unconscious bias? Well, there's tons of different ways to do that. The first is you should have a clear onboarding process that everyone goes through. So that everyone gets onboarded in the same manner. And that's not just HR onboarding, it's also team onboarding. What are the assets you give them to ensure that they know how to set up all the source code and all that kind of stuff and how to use the systems, right? So that everyone has the same structure. And then the next thing I would do is in those consistent meetings where, so let's say you have daily standups or whatever, you're making sure that everyone's voice is heard. That you're not just starting with the same person every time. Maybe you rotate who you start with in the standup, right? So that everyone gets an opportunity to go first and everyone gets an opportunity to voice. There's things that you can do that where you can rotate leadership for meetings. So like if part of the team runs the team sprint planning or whatever, you can rotate who's doing that. That you can also rotate who's the note taker. Things like that so that everyone gets the opportunity to play all the different roles and that everyone gets an opportunity for their voice to be heard.

David Caruso has earned his PhD in psychology and he has co-authored multiple books and tests, including the Mesquite Emotion Intelligence Test with John Mayer and current Yale President Peter Salovey. And he has coached and trained executives around the world on emotional intelligence. And David has kindly offered to do an intro session on emotional intelligence with us, and we plan to have more upcoming workshops in the area of emotional intelligence. And he has also offered to do emotional intelligence feedback sessions after any

emotional intelligence test as well, and by himself, all his colleagues. So thank you so much for joining, David. We're really excited and look forward to hearing what you can share with us today. Thanks for having me, Pianpian. Thanks for joining. Great. Well, like with every such thing, I'm going to share my screen and we'll show some slides. It's interesting because, you know, we're talking about emotions and emotions are very they're interpersonal. And so seeing people is really helpful. But at the same time, I like the structure of slides. And it's for me, it is an emotion management technique. It allows me to stay focused. So there's lots of reasons to do these things. All right. Great. The very last slide, I believe, has my email address. So for questions, comments, feedback, please don't hesitate to get in touch with me. First, really quickly, you know, if there's any personal information that we don't share that, but we do share and apply the content. That's really, really key. I think knowledge is of interest in and of itself, but we're really focused on behavior change. Like, what are we going to do differently? And I think that's absolutely critical when you engage in this kind of work. What is emotional intelligence? You know, it's a term that's been around for a little more now than 30 years in the popular press for a little over 25 years. But we have a really specific way of looking at it. And in our view, my colleagues view and myself, we see emotional intelligence as consisting of these four related skills. And we call them hard skills. It's not soft skills. And we'll go over the model a couple times, give you some background. But we'll spend most of our time on like, how to apply these skills, because that's the key. So first of all, what's the basis for it? Like, where does this stuff come from? And there's a lot of different strands of work, you know, so in the next three or so minutes, I just want to give you a real grounding for like, why are we here? Where's this stuff come from? So the first basis for emotional intelligence as a hard skill is that emotions are data. I love saying that. I want to say it again. I like it so much. Emotions are data. It's a form of information. They send signals. So like, here's a pretty basic example. If you're out in the street later today, it's getting dark and you come across the animal in the top middle with the outlined in red. That's a signal, right? That animal is signaling something to you. And your failure to read that emotion and read that signal could cause you some difficulties. Now compare that. You then turn the corner. You come across the dog in the lower right outlined in green. That's a different kind of signal. This dog is signaling something really different. And if you're a dog person, you may call this either submission or a real dog person would call it a play bow. It's like, hey, you know, scratch my belly and throw the ball for me. Let's have fun. Not a threat. I sometimes wonder when I'm really tired or groggy or wake up in the middle of the night and remember a dream. I sometimes wish that our human world were more like this. Like imagine you're in a meeting, you know, and it's contentious meeting and someone just growls at you and bares their teeth. Isn't that better than kind of just these snarky comments that sometimes you get or somebody else, you know, you're in a meeting with a colleague and you're not sure if that was a joke, but you are because he he's just engaged in a play bow. So maybe in a future world, we could be more dog-like and be a little more direct in sending these signals. So here's something else. This is the work of Antonio Damasio. A lot of what we do is tends to be counterintuitive. It's like, wait a minute, what do you mean? Like, where does that come from? And I think this is one of those statements. You know, a lot of us are taught that emotions just get in your way. They really mess you up. And we have a, we have a different view that emotions can help you think. So Damasio wrote, this is some years ago that far from interfering with rationality, the absence of emotion and feeling can break down rationality, make wise

decision making almost impossible. So if you really think about that for a moment, he says, emotions help you make good decisions, but that's like not anything we're taught. We're taught the opposite. So where is that coming from? And I hope that you'll see this in a minute, like where that does come from. So all these strands of research came together, two psychologists met in the 1980s and went to a conference. They wrote a little article that nobody read and they came up with the theory of emotional intelligence. And as Pian Pian mentioned at the beginning, those people are Peter Salovey and John D or Jack Mayer. They wrote this article, you know, many, many years ago, didn't get any attention until years later when somebody wrote a popular book and brought it to the, to the, to our attention. It happens that the three of us have been working together for, for quite a while as well. And we have a way of measuring emotional intelligence. It's an objectively scored skill-based assessment. It's challenging to take, it's challenging to hear the results as well. And that's because most of us overestimate our emotional intelligence. And something to think about is, so what's the, what's the problem if you're overestimating your skills in this area? And you can think of a few issues, right? You know, one is, I think I have a good read on people, but maybe I misread that individual, or I don't manage my emotions well, or I'm not matching my emotions with others. I don't make those connections. I wonder why that is. So there's some challenges with that overestimation. Now, the reason I show you this is not just to plant that idea, but to show you that in 30 years, we've got a pretty good basis for what we're talking about today. 30 years of research. Most of these are peer reviewed journals. I'm trained as a researcher, but my role is as a practitioner. As Pian Pian mentioned, you know, Jack is a professor at University of New Hampshire, the psych department, and Peter is a psychologist as well. He's now president of Yale. So these are some of our publications. I've known them for years, for more than 30 years. We've been colleagues and friends, and that's how I got involved.

thinking is one of those skills for us to, to, to really build, because what would, when we're thinking critically about the question that we're being asked, we examine the issue from all different sides. And so like, I always say, like, stay in the questioning, as much as you can, until you really understand what it is that we're trying to solve, right? What is the problem that we're truly trying to solve? And so can you stay in the questioning, so that you can gather as much relevant information in that process to make an informed decision. And then it really is about making an informed decision, weighing the pros and cons, let's say, two or three, two or three solutions, really breaking those down and really weighing the pros and cons of that. And then and then out of that, you're going to make an informed decision, right? I, I love Annie Duke's book. You know, she's a professional poker player. And she talks a lot about the art of making a decision. And making a decision is part information and part luck. Right? And every decision is that like in poker is the place to see this in action. But in her book, she talks about, you know, every decision is part information and part luck. And the question is, how much information do you want to base your decision on? Or how much luck do you want to base your decision on? And in a lot of business, if we're moving too fast, we're basing a lot of our decisions on pure luck. Right? So how can you change that pendulum through how you think critically about the problem, so that you're gathering as much information, so that the impact of luck is minimized, right? And so that's how I think about critical thinking is like, I'm trying to maximize how much information so I can minimize the impact of luck. Yeah, that that's a good point. So it sounds like

it's making sure you're examining and brainstorming, think about all the other options and ways to approach the problem and then have a systematic way to rate, compare those options and then figure out what is the best solution instead of trying to jump to conclusions. Yeah, yeah, because if you get to a conclusion, I can guarantee you don't have enough information. So do the analysis. Yeah. And then you'll be rebuilding.