

Phyllis Fagell Middle School Matters

Phyllis Fagell: [00:00:00] so much of the poor behavior we see with kids, whether it's online or in person, is because they're angry, because they're jealous, because they're feeling insecure. And so if we can build a culture of trust among kids in this age group, they're much less likely to make those poor decisions in the first place.

That was Phyllis faecal on psychologists off the clock.

Yael Schonbrun: we are three clinical psychologists here to bring you cutting edge and science based ideas from psychology to help you flourish in your relationships work and.

Debbie Sorensen: I'm Dr. Debbie Sorenson, practicing in Mile High Denver, Colorado. Co-author of Act, Daily Journal, and an upcoming book on act for burnout.

Yael Schonbrun: I'm Dr. Yel Shreen, a Boston based clinical psychologist, assistant professor at Brown University, and author of the book Work Parent Thrive.[00:01:00]

Jill Stoddard: And from coastal New England, I. Dr. Jill Sto, author of Be Mighty, the big book of Act metaphors and the Upcoming Imposter. No more.

Debbie Sorensen: We hope you take what you learn here to build a rich and meaningful life.

Jill Stoddard: Thank you for listening to psychologists Off the clock.

We're proud to be sponsored by Praxis. The premier provider of continuing education training for mental health professionals.

Debbie Sorensen: Right now Praxis is offering both virtual and in person trainings and for the virtual trainings, they have both live and on demand courses.

Jill Stoddard: Praxis is our go-to for evidence-based CE trainings and they're especially known for their act trainings. Some of the best expert, peer reviewed act trainers offer courses with Praxis.

Debbie Sorensen: Check out their current offerings@praxiscet.com or you can link to them through our website offtheclocksite.com and you can get a discount on live training events. If you use the code OFFTHECLOCK.

Jill Stoddard: I'm here with Yael to introduce today's episode with Phyllis Fal, where we talk about her [00:02:00] book, Middle School Matters. And this is a book where she helps parents gain key skills that kids need to thrive in middle school. And you know, I think as a parent, Every stage is challenging just for different reasons. My kids, as I say in the episode, my kids are eight and 10. They're not quite in middle school yet. Yeah, El does have a middle schooler. , but most of my friends with older kids all seem to agree that middle school and high school, you know, the tw and teen years are certainly the most challenging.

So I loved having Phyllis on to give us some guidance about how to help kids navigate this time. And yet I'm curious what your reaction to the episode.

Yael Schonbrun: I loved it. She seems so lovely and I think it's so nice to have a reassuring voice that has some concrete evidence back tips for how to manage this particularly challenging part of parenting. And I, I do think the tween years are sort of, we talk a lot about high [00:03:00] school and we talk a lot about, you know, when kids are really, really young.

But 20 years are hard. And you know, as the parent of a 12 year old with a lot of friends who have kids that are in middle school, you know, I have a lot of opportunities to talk with peers about the challenges. And I actually was telling Jill, I surveyed a couple of my really close friends for their challenges.

, and, and they really ranged the gamut. So one parent friend of mine said the biggest. Parenting challenges, knowing when to set the boundaries, , when her tween wants to keep pushing on them. So how firm to be versus when to say, You know, that's not the battle that I wanna fight. Another one. Well first she said, , everything is challenging, but I don't know if that's helpful.

And I said, Well, more specific would be helpful too. , although I think a lot of people will relate to, you know, it just feels kind of overwhelming. You don't know where to begin. , but she did narrow down and said that it's. Having real schoolwork for the first time, but in like nine classes and needing to ha help them to be organized and focused on schoolwork while also helping them manage the many other demands on their time.

So for, for example, sports and other extracurriculars.[00:04:00] , and then I actually asked my middle schooler, I said, What do you think the most

challenging thing is that you're struggling with now that you didn't struggle with in elementary? And he said this was sort of like a, a two-sided reflection. He said he really likes that there's a lot more kids in middle school than there was in elementary school, cuz you, you're much more likely to find the people that you really click with.

But also it's a lot more overwhelming and, , complicated to navigate some of the social situations. So, for example, you know, what do you do when someone is being unkind? But you feel a little, , terrified to stick your neck out and try to defend them because it might then mean that you are sort of going to next be the next in line to be bullied.

, so I thought it was amazing cuz you guys actually tackled a lot of these common challenges and offer specific concrete, practical tools that you can actually, you know, start using today with your kids.

Jill Stoddard: Yeah. Yeah, I agree. And oh my gosh, I love that you [00:05:00] did those surveys and , your little guy, not so little, you're not so little guy is so wise. There's a lot of wisdom in that that wouldn't have. Been occurred to me and now when I think about it, I think, gosh, yeah, that's like spot on that that would be a really hard change That also has some benefits and I love that he noticed both sides of it.

And I also love, she talks about how she is writing a follow up to middle school matters, and I don't think it comes out until next fall, but we'll have to have her back on because it really focuses on some of these other challenges that it sounds like are similar to the things that your friends had brought up.

Yael Schonbrun: And a little bit of backstory is that Jill and I were both talking with Phyllis Fal about her books, and I had been in touch with her about her next book and said, Oh, we need to have you on, only to realize that Jill had already scheduled with her for her first book.

So she is clearly somebody who's wisdom is highly sought after. Even within our podcast,

Jill Stoddard: Absolutely. And it also shows [00:06:00] how much our interests tend to align because it's not the first time that we that we've done that, where we've gone after similar

Yael Schonbrun: Yeah. And also how sometimes our communication isn't perfect because that's human . We do try,

Jill Stoddard: absolutely.

. Well, we hope that you enjoy this interview as much as Yeah, I and I did.

Hey everybody, it's Jill here and I'm thrilled to have my guest here today. Phyllis Bagel. Phyllis Fale is the school counselor at Sheridan's School in Washington, DC a therapist who works with kids and families in private practice and an author and journalist. She's the author of Middle School Matters , and a frequent contributor to the Washington Post.

She also freelances for publications, including Psychology Today, cnn, Working Mother, US News and World Report, and your team and her ideas have been shared in outlets, including the New York Times, the Atlantic, the New York. at Utopia Mind Shift and NPR [00:07:00] Phyllis is currently working on her next book, Middle School Superpowers, raising Resilient tweens in turbulent times.

She lives in Bethesda, Maryland with her husband and three children. Phyllis, welcome. I'm so happy to have you here on Psychologists Off the Clock.

Phyllis Fagell: I'm so happy to be here. Thanks for inviting.

Jill Stoddard: Of course. Well, this, I love this topic. , , so I have a 10 and an eight year old, and even though my, my daughter is only 10, she'll be in middle school next year, and I'm already seeing a lot of the sort of middle schooly things happening, and it, it certainly seems like.

Kids are getting exposed to things earlier these days, like sex and vaping and drugs and violence and pornography. , so I'm glad you're here to talk about this Tween Age group. So I love the title of your book, Middle School Matter. So I thought we could start with that. Like, why does middle school matter?

What is unique about this stage of development that makes it something we ought to sp we makes it [00:08:00] something we ought to pay special attention to?

Phyllis Fagell: I think historically middle schoolers have been lumped in either with elementary school kids or with older adolescents. And so the research tends to obscure the fact that it's this really distinct phase and kids in this age group and your child, your 10 year old's, definitely in the thick of it. That 10 to 14 year old age group tends to get short shafted, and I consider it the last best chance.

So it's this opportunity to get in there and really parent and coach your kids at a time when they are still impressionable, still really care what you think. They've started to pull away and spend more time with friends, but they haven't yet completely separated. So it's this amazing opportunity to help them develop the skills they'll need later.

Jill Stoddard: Yeah, absolutely. And I see it. I mean, just the vast difference between my eight year old and my 10 year old, and then of course 10 year old's, an actual teenagers. I mean it's, it's probably the most difference I've seen between my kids at any of their [00:09:00] stages. You know, of course they've always been two years apart, but they seem the most different now than I think they ever have before.

It's fascinating.

Phyllis Fagell: That is fascinating. Do they still get along

Jill Stoddard: I mean, you know, like 50 50 sometimes they play together and get along and then other times they're, you know, tearing each other apart. But I think it's pretty like normal sibling rivalry.

Okay. So I love following you on Twitter, you post all of these like, adorable, cute moments that you have with the students that you work with. And it's very clear in those tweets how much you love kids, but also like this age group specifically. So I'm curious, , what draws you to them?

Phyllis Fagell: I do love the age group. I think they're probably the funniest age kids. They often try to be funny and that falls flat and can come off as mean, but even then, it tends to be pretty funny as long as they're open to some correction, especially if they've hurt somebody else's feelings. [00:10:00] But it's this time when everything is funny to them too.

So. You may have seen a recent post that I put on Twitter. I was walking into the health room and there was a seventh grader in there who is, you know, was recuperating, maybe had a headache, and we had a get well sign with the individual letters, G E T W E L L. And she had switched it around, so it said wet gel.

And that was such a classic seventh grade move. And I think they see the world differently. I, I'm not sure that a nine year old or even a 15 year old would necessarily have gone into that health room and turned those letters into wet gel

Jill Stoddard: Yeah, that's great. I love it. My clinic is the Center for Stress and Anxiety Management, so the acronym is C Sam. And I don't remember which of my kids did it, but I had those individual letters like on a desk in my office, and I think it was my daughter, but she was little and didn't know how to spell and just [00:11:00] like, you know, , arbitrarily moved them around.

So then it said Scam,

Phyllis Fagell: Oh, that's funny. I was wondering if you were going in that direction.

Jill Stoddard: It's like not really the acronym you want for your therapy practice. I swear it's not a scam. I love that though. That's that's so cute. Well, and you can tell too that you, you really appreciate their humor. You know, there are probably things that kids are doing that are, that even sometimes it's like bordering a little bit on being naughty, but you seem to like really get the sort of like cuteness and humor and, and just them like developing their independence and kind of showing that side of their personality.

Phyllis Fagell: I think when parents are in the thick of it, it can be this incredibly disorienting and alarming phase. But I actually was really sad this year. My youngest child started ninth grade and for the first time in a long time, I have. Haven't had a middle schooler actually living in my house and he's still great and he's still funny, but there's a seriousness that tends to set in in high school that's just [00:12:00] slightly different.

So I always encourage parents of middle schoolers to try to enjoy that phase as much as they can.

Jill Stoddard: yeah. I love it. That makes sense. Well, so let's dive a little bit into the book. So you're in the book. So with the book again, is called Middle School Matters. Let's see what the subtitle is here. The 10 Key Skills Kids Need to Thrive in Middle School and Beyond, and How Parents Can Help. So like the title, you highlight these 10 key skills that MO Middle Schoolers need to master in order to Thrive.

, And so the book is really written for parents and for parents, right? And teaches us how we can help our kids gain mastery. So some of those skills, we're not gonna go into all of these in great detail. The book is amazing, you just have to read the book. You get so much out of it. But some of them include making good choices around friendships, responsibility and ethics, negotiating

conflict, including the teachers regulating emotions, self advocacy, , and some others.

So let's talk a little bit about how we can do that. So I do [00:13:00] wanna start with some, with the making responsible and ethical choices. And specifically, I think many parents, and I'm certainly guilty of this, feel almost compelled to like be directive. Like if we just tell kids what to do, they'll listen and do it.

But of course it doesn't really tend to work that way, does it? And you say in the book, you know, don't assume that kids this age can problem solve. The same way that adults can, but that we can help by encouraging critical thinking and asking questions and getting curious. So I'm wondering if you can talk a little bit about that, like how do we help kids develop critical thinking skills?

Um, and maybe talking a little bit about how you talk a lot in the book about how hypothetical scenarios can be helpful. So like, how do we get away from this directive? Like just do what I tell you to do and try to, you know, engender a little bit more of their own creative thinking so that they can negotiate some of these things.[00:14:00]

Phyllis Fagell: I think a huge portion of raising an independent thinker and a problem solver starting in the middle school years is really teaching them how to think, teaching them how to look at a scenario and make a judgment call in the absence of much life experience or perspective. And what makes it challenging is that if you tell a middle schooler what they should do, who they should be friends with, or prohibit them from doing something because you think it's a bad idea, all they're going to do is either.

Twist themselves into a pretzel to prove you wrong or they're going to sneak around. And really the greater gift is that we give them the tools to assess these situations when they're in them and make good decisions for themselves, because we won't always be there with them. And it's complicated because you can't be too personal if you make it too personal and almost anything can be considered too personal to an 11 or a 12 year old, they're going to shut down.

They're not going to talk to you. [00:15:00] So you can use hypothetical scenarios. You can ask them for advice about your own life. You can bring up something you heard about a friend's child and ask them what they think, something in the news, even music lyrics. And then you really wanna be helping them prime themselves to make good decisions, putting them in situations that won't get them into hot water.

So, It might be as simple as suggesting they sit on their hands for 10 seconds before they post something on social media. You know, media long enough to say, Could this hurt someone else? Could this hurt my own reputation? Is this something I'm going to regret tomorrow? It could be asking really expansive questions about their friends.

You know, I'm wondering, or I've noticed, or good nonjudgmental phrases, it seems like you're not yourself when you're with this particular friend, or, I've noticed you always get in trouble when you hang out with Joe. I wonder what that's about. What do you think?

Jill Stoddard: What would be a good example of a hypothetical scenario that then might [00:16:00] kind of open that door to the social media, You know, sit on your hands for 10 seconds like that, the nonpersonal hypotheticals.

Can you give a couple examples so people understand what we're talking about?

Phyllis Fagell: Sure. So you might. Say to them, and, and you can start with an example that doesn't feel quite as threatening, that really feels like you're interested in their opinion. And middle schoolers always like it when you talk to them as if they're a little bit older, a little more mature than they are. You wanna make sure that you're even, because if they think you're going to be reactive, they're not going to want to engage.

They, they have their reputation for seeking drama, but they really don't like it, particularly if it involves their parents. So I'll give you an example of a scenario. I gave a whole classroom full of seventh graders. I came in and I said, I want you to imagine you're invited to a sleepover. and the person inviting you to this sleepover is somebody who is not a close friend.

And in fact, it's somebody who doesn't have a lot of friends. [00:17:00] You think they're nice, you think they're fine, you're willing to go sleep over, but it's a much bigger deal for them than it is for you. And you know it is because they keep asking you things like, what kind of snack do you wanna have on hand?

What movie do you want to watch? And about a week before that sleepover, your best friend tells you that she wants to have a sleepover the same night for her birthday party and she's inviting four or five friends and you can't reschedule it. I always have to make sure there's no loopholes, cuz middle schoolers are always looking for the loopholes.

You can't reschedule it and it's not an option to invite that first friend to this birthday party. And then I ask them what they would do. How would they think through that scenario? So it's not as clear cut as, you know, cheating or lying in middle schoolers lie all the time. That's a whole other issue.

But it is one of those scenarios that just gets them to think a little bit more broadly, and it's an [00:18:00] opportunity to engage in conversation without it being too personal. And you never know where those kinds of discussions will take you, but it's an opportunity maybe to bring up a time when someone ditched you and how you felt in that moment, or to ask them how they'll feel in a month.

Looking back, how do you think you'll feel about the decision you made if you chose to do what you wanted to do, rather than what you felt was right?

Jill Stoddard: Oh, I love that. And how interesting to ask a whole classroom, because I imagine you have some kids who say, I would make up an excuse and not go and other kids who say no, I would go cuz it's the right thing. And then they get to hear each other talk about their reasons rather than just an adult having that conversation with them, which I imagine is partially or, or may even be more impactful when it's their same age peers.

Phyllis Fagell: definitely. And then another piece of this is also helping them assume positive intent in their peers. Because so much of the poor behavior we see with kids, whether it's online or in person, is because they're angry, [00:19:00] because they're jealous, because they're feeling insecure. And so if we can build a culture of trust among kids in this age group, they're much less likely to make those poor decisions in the first place.

So I might give the example of a kid who, or a mother who gets a call from another mother who says that somebody. Sent her daughter a video tape of two kids talking meanly about her daughter, and she wanted her to know, often parents don't know when and when they should and shouldn't get involved with this age group.

And the other parent might say, How could they do that? Why would they ever wanna pass along something so mean? Particularly if that child has shown the video to her daughter? And what I often reassure parents is that the child who shared that video, especially if it's a friend of her daughters, wasn't trying to be mean.

She probably thought she was being a good friend. She was letting her know, Oh, you can't trust these other two people. [00:20:00] And then you might ask your kid if you were using a scenario like that, you know, Would you wanna be told that information? What could you do with that information once you have it? Have you ever said something negative in private about somebody?

How would you feel if you knew someone had secretly taped it? And really helping them see that it's often. It's not meant to injure in the way that it might feel in the moment.

Jill Stoddard: right? Yeah. So there's a lot of like perspective taking that goes on. You know, they're sort of learning to see things. Kids are so egocentric and that starts to shift as they get older. And these conversations, I think it sounds like really kind of facilitate that process of being able to have empathy to step in someone else's shoes, to see someone else's perspective, rather than just seeing everything through their own lens.

Phyllis Fagell: And even if they do see it through their own line lens, which they're likely to do anyway, despite our best efforts to at least allow them an opportunity to maybe revisit it and file away what you think or to [00:21:00] maybe be able to pull that memory of the conversation they had with you later in another incident.

So with the sleepover story, I initially had them answer the question based on, What they thought was the best combination of being kind and doing what they wanted,

and pretty much all of them said they would ditch the first friend. And then I gave them a list of about a hundred values that I took from Brene Brown, staring greatly.

And I asked them to choose their top 10 individually. And then I said, Look at your 10 values that you chose that represent the things that are most important to you. If you were making the decision only based on those values, rather than what you thought was that mix of being kind, doing what you want, what decision would you make?

And almost all of them changed their mind,

which really just highlighted how much of what they're doing relates more to that need to fit in to that desire, not to miss out on fun, to all of those developmental [00:22:00] pieces of being a.

Jill Stoddard: that is so interesting. And that they care about their values, that when they stop and take a minute to really think about that, that that can influence their behavior. You know, I don't know that we give kids that credit that like, Oh no, they're old enough to really think about who they wanna be and how they wanna be in the world, and like, let's give them an opportunity to center those values and making decisions about how to walk through, you know, negotiate this stage.

That's really cool. Yeah.

Phyllis Fagell: They're, they're underestimated so

often they want to do the right thing. They want to be good people, and really most of the time when they make these mistakes, it comes from a good place. It just reflects their lack of experience.

Jill Stoddard: Totally. Yeah. Well, I love two of your suggestions around these, you know, having these, these kinds of conversations. And so one you talk about like giving them a sense of purpose, and I sort of associate that even a little bit with, with values. And then you also talk about sharing our own missteps [00:23:00] with them, that that can be a helpful way to have these conversations.

And I, I can see how like, when we admit our own mistakes, like not only is that, you know, like a teaching device, but I could see how that could really promote bonding, you know, between a parent and a kid. But can you talk a little bit about how to help kids find purpose?

Phyllis Fagell: So I think there is this misconception that purpose. Has to be this big, you know, flaming passion. And really what we're trying to do is help kids find that intersection of the things that peak their curiosity or their interest and things that they are maybe. Good at or feel is a strength of theirs.

That kind of magical intersection of things that they like and things that they're good at, and that's where purpose often comes from, from fan. The flames on those small interests and purpose also can come from helping someone else. We do a lot in [00:24:00] middle schools to empower older middle schoolers to help younger students in this school because they need to feel like they can contribute, that they can add value to the community.

It's such a key part of the developmental phase, and the more we can do to give them a place to put that urge, to help, to help them feel that they're adding that

value, the more they'll thrive in, the more that will fan the flames on that passion or that.

Jill Stoddard: Is there a way that parents can try to get kids to think about? You know, I, I'm just sitting here brainstorming like, well, if I wanted to get my kids to like, go volunteer at a soup kitchen, or I'm thinking if I just came out and suggested like, Hey, let's go do these things that have meaning, that make us feel like we're contributing, they would, you know, roll their eyes at me and not, I'd have to find a way to make it look like it was their idea.

Almost, you know what I mean? So how, how do we, how do we avoid the sort of like digging the heels in and like, [00:25:00] that's stupid cuz you suggested it and have them kind of come up with these ideas on their own.

Phyllis Fagell: You know, I think you need to know your child really well, so what is it that might feel meaningful to them and how can they get involved in a really personal way? I think I tell the story in middle school matters of a mom who has her children. Pick out backpacks and back to school supplies that they think a kid the same age would like.

And then she's really, deliberate and intentional about having them bring it to the, place where they donate it in person. So even though they're not handing it directly to the child, they are seeing what it's like to pass off something that they picked out that they know will help another child.

So making it personal. If your kid loves soccer, they might wanna collect soccer balls for schools in need. If they love to read, they might wanna do something related to book drive, but really trying to get a sense of what they're interested [00:26:00] in. And then temperamentally, some kids in this age group are really shy.

They have a very hard time putting themselves out there. And while face to face is the best, they may not be ready for that right away. They may wanna start even with something as small as just helping out more at home.

Jill Stoddard: Mm. Oh, that would be nice.

Phyllis Fagell: Yes,

Jill Stoddard: I'd go where that one, You know, it's funny, I remember it, we only did this one time to my memory, but when I was a kid, my parents took us, you know, to toys our Russ or somewhere to not to pick out anything for

ourselves, but basically to do some holiday shopping for, you know, kids who were in need and pick out toys for them and bring them to the drive and drop them up.

And I have very few explicit memories from childhood and that is what I remember, you know? And I remember how it made me. Feel right. It was like really impactful and it's, it's something I've thought a lot about and, and have thought like, what, how can I do this with my own kids and what's something that would be, [00:27:00] that they would be engaged in?

so I'll have to give it, I'll have to give it a little more thought, but that's really helpful. Think about like, if we can connect it to something that is important to them or they like, or value or is meaningful.

Phyllis Fagell: I love that memory and as an added bonus. And I think part of the reason why volunteering is so helpful for middle schoolers is because it gets them out of their own head

and it gives them a little bit more perspective. So there's always somebody who has more than you. There's always somebody who has less than you.

And there's a lot of value in getting a sense of the range of, uh, situations people find themselves in and feeling like not only can you give, but it's okay to ask for help when you need it to

Jill Stoddard: Mm. Oh, I love that. That's so great. So you mentioned a little bit ago, , you know, lying is like a whole, a whole other topic, and I have a lot of questions about lying. So you have a whole chapter in middle school matters on honesty. And you talk about how, you know, kids start lying pretty young, but the function and the [00:28:00] content of their lives tends to change as they get into the middle school age.

So I'm wondering if you can talk a little bit about this, and one question I was thinking of is like, what do you recommend for parents If we suspect a kid is lying, but we don't know for sure versus when we know a kid is lying and like, are there times that we let it go versus times we should choose to intervene or should it always be addressed?

How, what do we do?

Phyllis Fagell: So I do think you wanna call it out when you see it, but you don't want to. Lump together the lie and the consequence for whatever it is that

they did wrong. So if they sneak out and they lie about sneaking out, you wanna separate the two. There's a consequence for sneaking out, which might relate to having less independence or less freedom because they've lost your trust.

And then a separate consequence for lying. And the reason you wanna do that is because you wanna underscore how important honesty [00:29:00] is to you as a parent, and you don't want to lump them together because you lose that lesson if you do that. I always reassure parents because I can't even count the number of times someone has called me and said, I think my child's a pathological liar.

And it's usually, you know, a 13 year old.

Jill Stoddard: Yeah.

Phyllis Fagell: They're not pathological liars, they're not bad people. They are. Young adolescents is really part and parcel of this stage, and there's always a reason, as you were starting to share with a younger child. Lying is usually a form of creativity, imagination, wishful thinking, you know, unicorns and sparkles and imaginary chips and dip out on the playground using mulch and traffic cones.

It's a whole different, ball of wax. But with middle schoolers, when they start to lie, you really wanna be looking for the underlying reason because then you can target the real issue and [00:30:00] support them and still call out the line. So if they are telling you that they put away their phone and. You know they didn't, because you have evidence that they've been using screen time, then you might wanna be talking to them or figuring out is it that they are afraid of being left out of something?

Are they in the middle of an argument with somebody that they wanted to resolve and they just couldn't let it go? Are they angry and they're taking it out online? You wanna just be almost like an anthropologist or a detective and trying to find out what's under the surface. If they lie about doing their homework and they're not, It could be that they don't wanna do it, but it also could be that they don't know how to do it and they also don't want to admit that they don't know how to do it, but they need some extra support and maybe don't even know how to ask for support, even if they were willing to receive it.

So once you know what that underlying reason is, you can help. Maybe craft that email to the teacher if that's something they haven't yet mastered.

[00:31:00] You can help them problem solve and figure out what kind of

support they need from this school or from you, or maybe it's organizational support that they need, but really taking the time to investigate further.

Jill Stoddard: Yeah, someone said to me recently, and of course I, for the life of me, cannot remember who it was. So I'm not, I won't be able to give credit. But someone said that they had read or learned or heard that often lying. It comes from a fear of disconnection. So I'm afraid you'll be mad at me. I, I'm afraid the teacher will be upset with me.

I'm afraid my friend will be upset with me. That like, often it kind of boils down to this interpersonal kind of thing, which I thought was fascinating. I had never thought of it that way and it made so much sense.

Phyllis Fagell: makes perfect sense. And I think without knowing it, that's why when I'm asking a child why they did something or I know I'm about to call them out for a lie, rather than saying, How could you do that? Or What [00:32:00] were you thinking? Which is often what we are instinctively wanting to say. I always give them a plausible reason

for the lie first a way out so that it can strip some of the shame away, because if they feel ashamed, they're going to get stuck, and

then there's no opportunity for learning.

So I might say, you know, I'm guessing you ran out of the classroom because it didn't feel good to be embarrassed by the, You felt embarrassed by the teacher, or I'm guessing you cheated on that test because you. Were frustrated and overwhelmed and didn't know how to tell anyone that you

didn't know what you were doing. So you're giving them that reason. You're showing them some empathy for why they made the choice that they did. The next step then is going to be, here's why it's not okay,

because you need to have that teaching moment, but it should never come from a place of wanting to shame them. And in fact, if [00:33:00] you're feeling angry, you should probably process it with someone else

first so you can stay calm, because middle schoolers are reading every single piece of your body language and your tone and

the words you choose.

I think the example I use in middle school matters. A kid coming in the car didn't do well on a test. Maybe they get a c. You have spent a couple years or more telling them that as long as they work hard, you don't care what grade they get. But if when they tell you that in that moment, you pause for a minute,

which is so subtle before you answer, even if you're pausing because you were trying to pull out of a parking spot and it had nothing to do with that conversation, all they're going to hear is the pause and assume that you're disappointed and upset with them.

Jill Stoddard: Yeah. Yeah. Well, and even when you do that, that guess I'm guessing that you lied because you were embarrassed. Even if you get it wrong, you're opening a door and it's a, it's like an invitation, [00:34:00] like you said, it's not shaming, it's an invitation to talk. So you, So I think that's what occurs to me as a parent is like parents out there.

You don't have to know if someone's sitting there thinking, what if, I have no idea why they're doing that. Or like, I'm not a therapist. I don't know why people behave the way they behave. You know, if you, if you take a guess and the guess is wrong, it, I think it, that would still be an invitation to have an open discussion where they can then tell you the real reason.

Phyllis Fagell: Absolutely, and you don't have to go it alone either. It's totally appropriate to contact this school. There is nothing that a middle schooler can do that will shock or surprise anyone in this school setting. I know parents are often afraid to say, Look, I know that they cheated. You may not know, but I know, or, I know that they told you they left the homework at home, but I know they didn't do it, and I'm trying to figure out what's going on.

If you can call and partner with this school and ask them to tell you what they're seeing to offer suggestions, it can share [00:35:00] that burden and you can often get some really good information. Even it could, might be a coach, could be

a specials teacher or pe.

Jill Stoddard: Yeah. You also make the point that, you know, we all know this, that, that, like you guys usually do come out one way or the other, and that the lying, you know, they're typically lying to avoid some. Negative outcome, but the lying of course creates a more negative outcome than the one they were trying to avoid in the first place.

Is there a way to sort of like quote unquote, teach that lesson that isn't just overly like wagging your finger or directive because you know, you just tell them this and it's in one ear and out the other? Or is that something that kids just have to learn through experience? I kind of learn the hard way.

Phyllis Fagell: So right now the news gives us so many opportunities to talk about the dangers of lying and.

Jill Stoddard: Good point.

Phyllis Fagell: A lot of people are getting caught lies,

and that's not about them. It's not personal. So that's just one [00:36:00] way. It could also be something that comes from fiction, but you don't even need to turn to fiction. You can just say, Wow, did you see this news story?

I don't know why they thought they were going to get away with that when it was all in writing and

right

there in front of everybody. Or clearly the truth has a way of coming out. So you're talking about it. You're sharing what you know about lying. You know, it must be hard for them to keep track of their lives.

Look at how many times they had to invoke the Fifth Amendment or whatever it is that they

happened to do to try to get themselves out of a situation.

And often it's even harder to extricate yourself than it's worth in the first place. So the story I share in middle school matters is about a girl who is lying to her mother about or lying to her.

About having a boyfriend in another

state and the mom becomes aware that her child is doing this and she doesn't know how to handle it because she knows it's problematic. And eventually she, she addresses [00:37:00] it head on and the girl admits that it's become so hard, you know, suddenly she had to talk about how she not only had this boyfriend in Atlanta or wherever, she also had to talk about him as a soccer player.

And he lost the game and she had to keep embellishing and adding details and it was hard to keep track of it. And she wished she had never lied in the first place.

And then they could have a conversation about why she lied, which was really about not wanting to admit that she didn't have plans or that she felt like she didn't have as many friends as some of the other kids in her class.

Jill Stoddard: Right. I had a fake boyfriend named Eric when I was in fifth grade

I had earrings that say, I love Eric. And one of my friends had an, I don't remember her fake boyfriend's name, but she had the same thing. But luckily it never turned into any sort of like deep web of lies that we had to extricate ourselves from. But I love this idea about the news, and what really strikes me about it is we're talking to kids about lying and truth telling [00:38:00] at a time separate from when they're lying.

And that that may actually be a more helpful way to do it. Because if you catch a kid in a lie, of course you know you need to address it if it happens. But if the only time we're talking about it is when they're really anxious because they just got caught lying and you are really anxious because you're not exactly sure how to handle this seamlessly, you know, it seems like you, you can do a lot more of the sort of work for yourself if you're having these conversations in an ongoing way.

It may even make those acute. Moments easier to then deal with.

Phyllis Fagell: Definitely if you're in the thick of a disappointment. Either your child's or you're disappointed in them. That's really never the best time to have the conversation, and it's always okay to say, I think we both should calm down, or I think I need to process this, or I can tell you're already feeling upset about this, and so let's set it aside for tonight and we'll talk about it tomorrow.

Jill Stoddard: Yeah. Yeah, I mean, like all of [00:39:00] our heated conversations, that's good advice for everybody, for any relationship, whether it's parent, child or, or anything else.

, let's talk a little bit about meanness. You know, we've, we've seen it, we've said it like kid kids can be mean, but you talk in the book about how research shows that kindness being kind has a lot of benefits of greater happiness, being more well liked, , leading richer lives.

And, you know, certainly parents can model kindness and, and should, but what do you suggest we do if we see or hear that our kids are being mean? And then especially like, what if that meanness is because of something like, you know, race or gender, disability, sexual orientation. Like these are, you cover some really difficult topics in the book, which, you know, I just, it's like all the stuff that I think is so hard for parents that, you know, you think changing diapers [00:40:00] is gonna be hard and then you get to this stage, you're like, Oh my God, I don't know what to do when my kid asks me these questions.

Or, or I hear that. They're like, they're the bully. Like, Oh my God, this is the dreaded moment. So, So how do we handle this if we find out that our kids are being unkind?

Phyllis Fagell: So a researcher told me, one of the people I interviewed for this book, and at the time he had an 18 month old daughter, and he said his worst fear was that she would be popular. And the reason that was his biggest fear is because he knew that the long term outcomes for kids who gain popularity through power and aggression versus the skills of likability, meaning being generous, being a good listener, reciprocity, were really not good.

They had more

anxiety and depression, more substance abuse, less relationship stability, uh, less higher education. And the list goes on and on. And then he told [00:41:00] me that if your child is popular, even if they just have a lot of friends, you can be sure in middle school that they are being mean. So they had done all of this mapping to see how the social network.

Tied together those webs and discovered that the higher someone was, in the social pecking order, the more likely they were to have stepped on the heads of the people below them to get that status, which meant the closer you were to the top of that heap, the more likely you were to be surrounded by frenemies, you know, fair

weather friends who were just trying to get that status.

And so the happiest kids, leaving aside the bad long term outcomes, the happiest kids were the ones out in left field and right field who had found a couple of people who they felt good around and with whom they could be their authentic selves. And so popularity just isn't all its cracked up to. So that's the first thing, and I always [00:42:00] tell kids that, and they're always surprised because they not only do they want to be popular, if you ask a room full of say,

fifth or sixth graders to rank kids by popularity, they can do it and there will be a lot of uniformity from child to child.

They really all see it very similarly in that age range. But I also tell them that the friendships themselves, no matter how popular or unpopular you are, they're all very fragile. So there is really not a single person who is going to get through middle school without getting dumped by a friend.

If you look at the statistics, only a third of friendships are stable from the fall to the spring of sixth grade.

Only 1% of friendships last from seventh grade to 12th grade. 12% of sixth graders have nobody at all. Name them as a friend. And when I share these statistics, With Oh, and if, if you ask kids to name their best friend, only half of the people they name are going to name them back.

And so adults think, Oh my God, that sounds terrible.

Like, that's all the worst things [00:43:00] I've ever thought about middle school. But when you share that with kids, it's so reassuring because they think, Oh, this is happening to everybody. There isn't something wrong with me.

It's not personal.

Jill Stoddard: That's fascinating. And so, so we can make. Kids feel better about not being popular, especially if we know that popularity is often linked to meanness and kindness has all of these benefits. What if we do have a popular kid and and a kid who's mean like, ha, can we, I don't know. How do you sort of like knock them down a peg? That's a terrible way to put it.

But how do we like engender kindness or make them feel motivated to be more kind?

Phyllis Fagell: Some of it has to do with teaching empathy, uh, reading books like Wonder, watching the movie Wonder is just such a great example of a way to teach a kid to have empathy for others, some of it is calling out the meanness. When you hear it, you know, you're driving in [00:44:00] the car, you hear them say something to a friend, and again, you're not looking to shame them, but you might say, Oh, I'm really surprised to hear you say that you've always been friends with this person, or you, I've never heard you say something unkind about them in the past.

Or you might later on say, How do you think they would feel if they heard you saying that about them? Or how would you feel if someone said that about you? But I think. One piece of that that's come out through the pandemic even more so than when I wrote middle school matters that's really stuck out for me is that it comes down to social skills and teaching concrete social skills.

You can tell a kid to be nice, but if you don't operationalize what that looks like, they may not be able to pull it off. And so things like making eye contact, entering a conversation, letting someone else into a conversation, making sure that you are not posting pictures of a party to which you didn't invite everyone in your friend group.

All [00:45:00] of these very almost sophisticated for a middle school or social skills that we take for granted, they either have or will just somehow acquire, often need to be taught very explicitly. If you have somebody say to you, oh, looks like it's time for you to mow your lawn or clean up your leaves, and it's a neighbor, you can use a situation like that to say, You know, I wonder if what they're really trying to say is they're afraid my leaves are going to blow on their lawn, and they're trying to subtly tell me without calling me out, that it's time for me to clean my lawn.

And so you're using these very small examples to teach your kids how to read very subtle social cues,

and also how to talk to others in a way that isn't too offensive as

well.

Jill Stoddard: I, This is really making me think too, cuz it's, it occurs to me that, you [00:46:00] know, like talking about people kind of naly behind their back, like these things actually have bonding properties. Right? And I don't know the research well enough, but there's some research that shows, you know, that like oxytocin actually gets a boost when you bond over an out.

Like you are in an in group with another friend and there's someone else who's in the out group and. I try to imagine like, well, if I just tried to say, Hey, did you know that the research shows that, you know, to like talk about the function, that again, would go in one ear and out the other. But if there's a way to have one of these, you know, Fal like conversations around like just sort of wondering and getting curious, like do you have any thoughts about how we might have an in around a conversation like that?

If that would even be helpful?

Phyllis Fagell: I think first just acknowledging why it's important to them.

You know, letting them know you understand that having the best story at lunch. Is a very powerful feeling

and it feels good [00:47:00] and helping them project into the future. How would you feel? How do you think you're going to feel in a couple weeks if that person finds out, you shared that secret that you had promised not to share, or you told a story that was mean spirited and asking them questions like, Do you think you were your best self in that moment?

Putting it back on them, that values activity is another way to really get them thinking about that. There's a researcher, at Dartmouth College, a guy named Josh Compton, and he does something called inoculation theory, and he believes you can inoculate kids against bad choices the same way you can inoculate somebody against the flu.

And the way it works is that you preview a scenario like you're going to hear the juiciest gossip and then. In inoculation theory, you tell them why they're going to want to share it, and you're really going to want to share it because it feels good to have the best story in that moment. It does [00:48:00] feel kind of powerful.

It helps you bond with friends. It feels like money, like currency in, in that, in environment. And then you give them a compelling counter argument for why they don't want to do it. So you would say, you know what feels even better to be known as a vault, to be known as the person that everybody trusts, to be the person everybody goes to in a crisis and can count on.

And if you do that across enough different scenarios, what happens is they actually learn to think that way. So I, I think it's just a really intriguing concept.

Jill Stoddard: I love that. Yeah, that's really, that's so cool. , Okay, so I have two other que, I'm watching the clock here. We're getting a little bit close to the end, and I, you know, I saved these, these juicy things for, for for the bottom of the interview. I'm wondering if you can give us some tips on managing tough questions.

I mean, I feel like this is, this is just one of those [00:49:00] fun, funny, but also dreaded areas of parenting when your par, when your child asks you, Have you ever done drugs? Did you have sex before you got married? How many people,

My, my daughter asked me recently if Daddy was the only person I'd ever had sex with.

And then asked and I said, I said, I don't know if this was right or wrong, but I said, Well, I didn't meet daddy till I was 31. So she sort of like figured out that probably that was a no. And then she asked me, Did you regret. And I was like, Oh my God, how do I answer this question? So I think these are the, you know, like these sort of like dread, like what do we do when these questions are asked?

So do you have any tips, and I don't know if the tips are different for specific questions or if there's a more like, sort of global way to go about thinking about this.

Phyllis Fagell: You know, I love that your daughter feels comfortable enough to ask you

those questions, and as the parent, I think you have to be factoring in their age, their maturity, [00:50:00] their interest in the topic. You have to make sure you're answering the question that they ask and not the question that you think they're asking.

Jill Stoddard: Mm,

Phyllis Fagell: You can often open a whole can of worm. Inadvertently, you know, they might ask you, you know, tell me a little bit more about childbirth and you're about to launch into a whole thing about the birds and the bees. And, and they are like, No, no, I just wanna know, like, what hospital was I born?

Jill Stoddard: right?

Phyllis Fagell: really getting a sense of what it is they wanna know.

And then it's okay to withhold if it's something too personal. It's very different to ask a question about, you know, a, a sex act, let's say, versus your own sex life. And I think when it comes to questions about sexuality, answering factually and being forthright is really important because you want them to be asking those questions so you can help them with that decision making process and share your values, which will be different from family to family.

For things like drugs, [00:51:00] again, you wanna make sure that they can contextualize it and that they won't be overwhelmed by the information. And so,

A lot of it is more art than science. Trying to figure out what it is you think they're ready for and can receive in that moment and need to know

Jill Stoddard: the sort of rule of thumb that I've had for myself is like, well, if they're asking the question, I sort of assume that means they're ready for the answer and I'm gonna give them the least amount of information, factual information that I need to, to answer the question. And that's it. And whatever's developmentally appropriate, whatever I think maybe is development appropriate.

So when my daughter was only five, she asked me, I think just, you know, where babies come from. And I told her about the, they come from mommy, or they come from mommy and daddy. Like, boom, that's enough, Right? She's five. And then she was like, But how, you know, she kept probing. So then I'm [00:52:00] like, Oh, I got this.

I'll just talk about the, the seed and the egg, and then she'll get bored and it'll be over. Right? So I give her some scientific answer about that. And then she's like, but how does the seed get to the egg? I mean, it just kept going. She was so curious and she really wanted to understand and I was like, Oh my God, this is it.

It's go time. I didn't think this was gonna happen this early. And I did end up telling her and she seemed ready and fine. And then I said, You know, most kids don't know this at your age and this is something they should learn from their parents, not from other kids. So you can talk to Daddy and me about this all you want.

You can ask us as many questions as you need, but I would rather you not talk to other kids about it cuz they should really learn , learn from their parents. Well, fast forward a few months. I'm on a cruise with my brother and his family, and thankfully I had told my brother and sister-in-law this story because next thing I know, my nephew, who's a year and a half older than her, [00:53:00] comes in the middle of the dining hall, tearing around the corner.

Auntie, is it true? Is it true about the, and the vagina and ? He was so, He was so upset and shocked and I was just like, Oh my gosh, my very best efforts, and they just have backfired. The cat was out of the bag,

but

then me, he never asked another question about it, like he, so for him, he just wasn't ready yet.

Like he didn't go to my brother and sister-in-law. He didn't ask more questions yet, like he heard what he heard, and then it just went away for a while, you know?

Phyllis Fagell: That's a great story, and again, just goes to that whole idea that it's every kid is different. But I do remember talking to the sex educator, Deborah Rothman, about this, and she, she feels that if you are an q my 14 year old, by the way, walking out of the room, , that was, that [00:54:00] was when he decided to exit, um,

Jill Stoddard: See, all kids are different. He's like, Okay, I don't know what you people are talking about. I'm out.

Phyllis Fagell: I'm at, He's out. Yeah. Um, but she said that talking about if you wait to talk about sex in the service of reproduction beyond around age eight, you're late.

Jill Stoddard: Yeah.

Phyllis Fagell: So they do, they do need to, if they, if you wanted to learn it from them, to learn it from you, it's all earlier than you might expect, and especially with social media and all of the time kids have spent online in the last few years, they've seen everything.

Jill Stoddard: Yeah. Yep. Yeah, I think that's, that's a real issue these days, and it is, if we want them to hear it from us, we need to be talking about it sooner rather than later. Yeah.

Phyllis Fagell: And it doesn't have to be you. I know that for some parents it makes them super anxious to have that conversation. [00:55:00] It can be that anti or it a much older sibling or a cousin or somebody else if you feel like you're not equipped to have it. And if their, if your child is old enough that they need the information but doesn't wanna hear it, whether it's puberty or anything else, even just having a lot of books around.

that they can look at giving them access to websites like amaz.org, which has great videos.

Jill Stoddard: Oh, what's that? I'm not familiar with that

Phyllis Fagell: It's, it's relatively, you know, the last few years, but I love it. It's, there are animated videos that are age appropriate about everything from friendships and relationships to sexuality, puberty, and features diverse characters.

So it's, it's, um, it's done well, but it's silly and goofy and so it eases some of the anxiety kids feel about learning about some of these topics.

Jill Stoddard: Oh, that's great. I'll have to check that out.

Phyllis Fagell: yeah, it's still respectful. It doesn't treat them like they're, you know, it treats 'em like they're smart and they can handle it.

Jill Stoddard: right. That's fantastic. So I have one other question [00:56:00] that this may be way too big of a question. I mean, you know, this is a question that, like other people have written entire books about, but it, it, I think it's really relevant to the content of the book. You know, we talked about what do you do if you're, find out your kid is mean.

What we didn't talk about is like, what do you find out? What do you do if your kid is being bullied or kids are being mean? And all of what it makes me think about is, How much should we be intervening here? Like how do we sort of know how much we should be getting involved versus like letting kids figure things out on their own?

You know, I notice, I feel compelled to intervene when my kids fight, for example, but if I just back off, they figure it out, you know? And so how do we know like where that line is?

Phyllis Fagell: You know, I think a lot of people don't understand what bullying is and what bullying isn't. If it's actually bullying, it's the three Ps. There's power. Purpose and a pattern, meaning there's [00:57:00] an intent to wound, it isn't just one straight comment. It's happening repeatedly and there's a power imbalance.

And that power imbalance could be older kid, younger kid, bigger kid, smaller kid, group of kids against one kid who's more vulnerable. That can show up in lots of different ways. If it's actually bullying, if it has those three Ps, you don't ever wanna promise your child, you won't tell you, You may very well need to involve this school.

You can first say to them, How do you want me to handle this? Do you want to do this with me? Do you want me to call them myself? Do you want me to ask them to, uh, be really subtle? I always reassure kids and parents that a school can say, We heard this from someone in the community. They don't necessarily have to say they heard it from.

The student or the student's parent. And often they don't, often they might hear it from one of the other kids in the grade, so, but it's important that you tell because they're, that's a situation where they really can't handle it on their own. [00:58:00] If you have a really strong relationship with another parent, you might be able to have that conversation, but most of the time it's not advantageous for, if it's not technical bullying, you really don't wanna get involved if you don't have to.

You wanna be starting from that stance of curiosity, asking all of those questions that get them thinking critically about whether it's a friendship that works for them. You can't dictate that they shouldn't be friends with them because it will backfire. But you do want to be setting them up in situations where they can meet other kids, where you can start expanding their social network.

Maybe you invite them in a friend after a sporting event to go out for ice cream so that they can get to know them better. It might be that temporarily they have to find friends in different settings. It could be a religious youth group, it could be a summer camp friend, somebody from another school in the area.

The key thing is that they are interacting with somebody and that they have a couple of friends at least, that they can turn to while they're [00:59:00] weathering this hard time. I will say the one exception to that, and I mentioned this in the book as well, if you have a child who is a lot for one target friend and maybe they're getting bullied in part, or kids are rejecting them in part because they're just a lot for one friend to manage and you know that about your child, and parents usually do know that.

Sometimes I see this more often with kids who have ADHD and have trouble reigning in some of that exuberance. In those situations, you really wanna be maybe having lots of social interactions that are shorter bursts of time, but with lots of different people rather than identifying .

Those one or two kind kids who would tolerate them because then you're going to overburden them and they may then pull away.

Jill Stoddard: right. Oh, that's great. That's, I think that's a really important distinction. And then, so for the, the, the conflict that's less chronic, you know, just like, just having a hard time with this one cuz kids get over that stuff fairly quickly. Right. You [01:00:00] get in a fight today and tomorrow your BFF's again, like I'm assuming in those kinds of situations, we just sort of like, let them figure it out.

Phyllis Fagell: Yes. And you can, you can coach them a little bit and you can also ask them what they want from you. So if your child comes home and they say, You know, so and so was such a jerk, or they're crying because they weren't invited to something, and they feel bad, or they feel rejected, disappointed, you can, you can just be a really good, empathetic listener and ask them if, How they want to handle it.

You know, help them realize that they're, they don't have to just be reactive or passive. There's probably something proactive they could do, which is so empowering. So maybe they weren't invited to that particular sleepover, but is there someone else they would like to invite over? Is there somebody who maybe doesn't have as many friends but who they like and they could maybe help someone else who might be in a similar situation feel better, but really looking to find either a pivot or a way to turn a [01:01:00] negative into a positive.

If they're open to that kind of problem solving, sometimes they just wanna vent and dump it on you, and the gift that you're giving them is receiving it so that they can go back in the next day and do it all over again.

Jill Stoddard: Right. Just kind of helps them regulate rather than needing to give them a solution. Yeah. Well, we're just about outta time. This has been so great and there is so much more in this book. I mean, we couldn't possibly get to all of it. There's sections on love and helping kids grow up sexually healthy. , homework risk taking.

There's, there's a, there's chapters like that have specific gender considerations in them. I mean, I can't recommend it highly enough. It's really great. And then you have another book coming out this fall, and I mentioned it in the bio, but remind us what the title is.

Phyllis Fagell: It's, , middle school superpower is raising resilient tweens and turbulent times, and it comes on the heels of, you know, a rough couple of years for kids and adults. And so it's a book [01:02:00] about how to give kids the tools to deal with all of the hits that they take. And some of it is not necessarily

a classic hit, like getting dumped by a friend could just be changing from elementary to middle school.

It could be parents. Splitting up. It could be, uh, having a learning challenge. It could be being the only person in a particular identity group in your community. It could be a socioeconomic difference, any kind of othering or any kind of disappointment or challenge or setback. How can we help kids develop the tools, acquire the tools they need to recover?

And I use really specific scenarios,

Jill Stoddard: I feel like it's such good timing. You know, I've noticed you, you know, when we were growing up, like I had no idea what was going on in the world. Like I, I would, we were sheltered from all of that. And you know, I noticed like my kids are, even though we're not like watching the news regularly in front of them, they're just hyper aware of all the challenging things going on in the world.

And then of course, Covid [01:03:00] made that, you know, nobody was unaware of Covid. And I feel like they've just taken on like this, this the burden of these stressors so much more than past generations. So I think it's such great timing to have a, a book about, you know, skills for developing resilience. So we will look forward to that coming out and hopefully have you back on to talk in more detail about that book.

But in the meantime, , tell us where people can find you if they wanna learn more, or I imagine you have a newsletter or a mailing list of people want to be alerted when that book hits the shelves.

Phyllis Fagell: First, thank you so much for having me on. It was really great to talk to you and to see you in person, at least for the two of us. , they can find me@phyllisfale.com is my website, and that's also where you could subscribe to a newsletter and I will send out one closer to when the book is coming out.

I'm also, as you mentioned earlier, on Twitter at P ael and I'm on, I use that handle on most of my social media, so you can find me there, but I'm most active [01:04:00] on Twitter. Yeah, and so, or read the book,

Jill Stoddard: Yeah, that's great. So we will link to all of that in the show notes. And thank you again so much for being here. This was really great.

Phyllis Fagell: Thank you.

Yael Schonbrun: hey psychologist off the clock listeners. I'm going to guess that if you are listening to this episode, that you love to geek out about books in psychology.

Katy Rothfelder: So if you are a fellow book, nerd like Yale and I, and all of the people around you are tired of you talking about books. Then you can join us once a month to really take a deep dive into the books that we're going to be reading to you.

Yael Schonbrun: So if you want to join us , all you have to do is send an email. With the subject heading RSVP to off the clock psych@gmail.com. And we'll send you information for upcoming meetings of the book club.

We hope to see you there[01:05:00]

thank you for listening to psychologists off the clock. If you enjoy our podcast, you can help us out by leaving a review or contributing on Patreon.

Yael Schonbrun: You can get more psychology tips by subscribing to our newsletter, and you can find us wherever you get your podcasts. Connect with us on social media by going to our website

at off the clock, psych.com/march

Jill Stoddard: We'd like to thank our strategic consultant, Michael Harold, our dissemination coordinator, Katy Rothfelder, and our editorial coordinator, Melissa Miller.

Debbie Sorensen: This podcast is for informational and entertainment purposes only, and is not meant to be a substitute for mental health treatment. If you're having a mental health emergency dial 9 1 1. . If you're looking for mental health treatment, please visit the resources page of our website off the clock.

psych.com.