

# Goodbye to Yael with Yael, Debbie, and Jill

**Yael Schonbrun:** it's just been so much fun connecting with guests and learning the technology and reaching an audience and having a back and forth with our listeners starting the book club.

Like there's been so many parts of this journey that are so deeply rewarding . So there's been so many gifts along the way that are powerful in and of themselves.

**Jill Stoddard:** That was our very own Yael Schonbrun 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 health.

**Debbie Sorensen:** I'm Dr. Debbie Sorensen, practicing in Mile high Denver, Colorado, author of ACT Daily Journal, the Act Daily Card Deck, and the upcoming book ACT for Burnout.

**Yael Schonbrun:** I'm Dr. Yael Schonbrun, a Boston-based clinical psychologist, assistant professor at Brown University, and author of the book Work Parent Thrive.

**Jill Stoddard:** And from Coastal New England. I'm Dr. Jill Stoddard, 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. Well everyone, it's with bittersweet feelings that I announced today's episode because you may have heard a few episodes back that our dear darling co-host, Yael

Schonbrun is leaving us, and I have a lot of feelings about this and so the three of us are here today to send Yael off with a goodbye episode.

**Debbie Sorensen:** And it's funny because I definitely find myself feeling a lot as we start recording today's conversation. And Jill, I hope you don't mind me saying that we joked it was a Freudian slip because we had scheduled this interview weeks ago. And mysteriously Jill, who is usually very on top of her calendar.

In fact, Yael and I are usually asking her when we're supposed to meet, mysteriously forgot and had to shuffle some things around to make this happen. Jill, is that true?

**Jill Stoddard:** This is true. And yes, I think we're probably all having a lot of feelings about this episode and you know, even though we are more behaviorist than Freudian, it did seem like it might, that there might have been something in the subconscious going on that I mysteriously forgot to put this in my calendar when it's a thing that I don't normally do so, but I think as much as we're clearly very, very sad to be saying goodbye to Yael, she is a friend of course. So it's not really a goodbye behind the scenes, but it's a goodbye on the podcast. But we're also really happy for Yael too, and, and she's gonna tell you guys today a little bit about her decision making process around this. And, and the thing I think that's so interesting about it is we have shot ourselves in the foot basically because we've had so many helpful episodes and Yael has learned so much from those episodes that they turned into her making, making this decision.

**Yael Schonbrun:** It's true. It's true. I think that there is a huge irony that a lot of the wisdom that guided this decision making process of leaving the podcast came from wisdom nuggets that were gained through the podcast. So, That is true, and I share with you guys that I have a lot of feelings about it. It's, it's been like a strange summer.

Um, so I made the decision in late spring and through the summer it's been like a lot of going back and forth and uncertainty and returning to a lot of the processes that I'll talk a bit about later on in our conversation. But it's been a tough decision and honestly, this just feels surreal.

It's been such a part of my life to do this podcast. It feels not true that we're recording a goodbye episode for me. So it's a very strange experience. But to go back a little bit in my podcasting history I'm a planner. I had ideas of what I was gonna do in my professional life and podcasting was not a part of the plan. In

part 'cause I didn't know that it existed. And in part because I never really saw myself as somebody who likes to talk in front of other people.

So it was just not something I ever figured I would do. And the reason that I joined in the first place, in addition to having a really fun first conversation with Diana who invited me on, was that I knew that I wanted to be a writer. I had, in 2014 written a piece on parenthood that landed in the New York Times and then pretty quickly decided I wanted to write a book about working parenthood and started exploring the options and what I was told by all sorts of people in the publishing industry is that I needed a platform, like a place to, to, to connect with an audience who might buy the book. And I didn't really have one from where I was. And so I was like, oh, cool, well podcasting would serve that. So it really started out as like a means to an end, with the end being, becoming a writer.

But really quickly, it became an end unto itself. Like I really enjoyed it. I really enjoy working with the team. It's just been so much fun connecting with guests and learning the technology and reaching an audience and having a back and forth with our listeners starting the book club.

Like there's been so many parts of this journey that are so deeply rewarding . So there's been like so many gifts along the way that are powerful in and of themselves. And in addition, I was finally successful in publishing a book about working parenthood.

It came out in November of 2022, so not quite a year ago, and that was an incredible experience and to share it with the podcast audience and, and with you guys who have helped me throughout this journey of book writing. And then what was so cool is like it kind of opened up new writing opportunities.

I started publishing in media outlets more regularly and connecting with other authors and collaborating, and now I'm working on a new book. Then in the spring, which was, you know, several months after the book came out, I just started feeling really overwhelmed by all the things. And that's when I started thinking about some of the decision making tools that we've learned about through interviewing decision making experts on the podcast.

And, it was really through a lot of those strategies that I had to come back to, you know, what are my core goals, what are my core values? And that really led me to thinking about considering leaving the podcast. And it seemed to make sense on the one hand, and I'm still like, Hmm, am I making the right choice?

So I still have some self-doubt, but I think this is the right choice, although who really knows.

**Jill Stoddard:** like, isn't this the nature of decisions though? It's like why decisions are so hard because you don't have a crystal ball to know what the outcome will be. And you know, I talk to a lot of clients about this where I think sometimes humans we love predictability and certainty, and I think sometimes we stay stuck in a place because we wait until we know with 100% certainty that something is a right decision and that doesn't really exist and that, you know, what I often say to clients is, We make decisions and they have consequences and some of those consequences we like and some of those consequences we may not like, and that may even lead to pivoting and other decisions, but that it's important to be able to move forward in the best way you can with the knowledge that you have, even amidst a lot of self-doubt and uncertainty.

And so as much as I'm sad you're going. I appreciate how thoughtful you've been about this and I really feel like proud of you that you are moving into a somewhat uncomfortable space. 'cause you can feel like, I'm pretty sure this is the right decision. And also like not really know for sure and you won't really know until time passes and you see kind of how things go and you know, it's not an easy thing to do.

And I know Yael too, you care so much about your relationships and your friends and not letting people down, not disappointing people. And so I'm sure there was an element of this too, that, you know, it was probably hard to tell Debbie and me worrying about how we would feel about the decision.

**Yael Schonbrun:** Oh, for sure, for sure. And just a quick addition to that is that Annie Duke, who we had on to talk about her amazing book *Quit*, which the subtitle is *The Power of Knowing When to Walk Away*. She talks about that people often wait too long to quit because they're looking for that certainty. And I, I can like feel that desire and I, I think it's so human.

**Debbie Sorensen:** I dunno if that questioning ever goes away. So I had a period, this was over 15 years ago, probably, I don't know, not 20, but definitely over 15 years ago when I was finishing up grad school and I was offered a teaching job, more of an academic job at a liberal arts school in their psychology department.

But I was also had started clinical training. Kind of wanted to move back home, back west. And this job was on the East coast and I had started dating this guy I was excited about, who's now my husband, by the way. So clearly I didn't, I, it

would've involved leaving this new relationship. I mean, we could have tried to make it work, but it was too early probably for it to work.

So I had to make a decision, do I take this job? Or do I go into clinical work, stay with this new boyfriend of mine and move back west where we're both from? And it was such a, like, I could just almost picture these two paths diverging. So I, I chose clinical work and moving back to Colorado and seeing what happens with this guy who I'm now married to and a half two kids with.

But the other day I had this thought. What would my life be like if I would've taken that job? You

know,

**Jill Stoddard:** like the movie Sliding Doors. Do you guys know that

**Debbie Sorensen:** Debbie out there, and

**Jill Stoddard:** Yeah.

**Debbie Sorensen:** if I would've been happier? You know? I mean, I don't think so. I think I made the

right

**Yael Schonbrun:** it's like the Robert Frost poem. Two Roads Diverged in.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Yeah. So it's just, it's funny 'cause it's like there, you always wonder what would life have been like if I would've made this other decision?

**Jill Stoddard:** That's a good point. You get to see how your decision turns out, but you don't ever get to see how the alternative decision would've turned out.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Oh my gosh. That was just such a long story. I did not mean to

go into that.

**Yael Schonbrun:** It was such a, it was.

**Jill Stoddard:** cute. I love it. So, Yael, do you wanna talk about which of our guests and episodes had the biggest influence on you? So Debbie and I know who we need to yell at.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Who's responsible

**Jill Stoddard:** Duke. Sounds like

**Yael Schonbrun:** ans Annie

**Jill Stoddard:** Leidy Klotz

**Yael Schonbrun:** Leidy Klotz. So Leidy Klotz and I had a conversation about his book Subtract and he's actually become a friend and a colleague and somebody whose philosophy of subtraction really offers a guiding , framework but actually there's a much earlier episode, essentialism with Greg McEwen that I had this really powerful conversation. It's also a terrific book where he talks about, you know, if you say yes to everything, you're kind of saying no to everything, because you're gonna be pulled in so many directions that you're not gonna do a very good job.

And Leidy's work from a very research oriented way, talks about how when we feel overwhelmed, we're much more likely to add than to subtract even when subtraction is the better life design choice. And so I very purposefully ask myself, you know, is there something that needs to be taken off the plate to make what is on the plate more doable in an effective value aligned way?

**Jill Stoddard:** one of the things that really struck me about that episode in particular is the difference between subtracting and saying no. So you might get better at saying no to things where you're not adding things, but that's not the same as actually taking some things off your plate, right?

Subtracting is very deliberately taking things off your plate.

**Yael Schonbrun:** Yeah, I think that's such a good point that it's, it, it is. So you can add, you can say no to new things, but keep doing what you're doing or what he's really emphasizing. You can actually take things away and that isn't something that most people do very naturally. And, so if you are interested in removing things from your plate, you have to recognize it does take effort and, and very deliberate effort.

It isn't something that comes automatically for most people and certainly not for me. And another person that I'll mention is of course, Brad Stohlberg, because he actually invited me as a part of his organization, the Growth Equation. To, , contribute a newsletter on relationships.

So they already have a couple of newsletters that they produce that are absolutely terrific on personal excellence and change and individual growth. And they wanted somebody who would write about this other facet of life that's so important that we know from tons of research is one of the keys to a happy and successful life.

And, When they invited me to do it, I was like, oh, cool. An opportunity to write. But between the podcast and the newsletter and my desire to write another book and parenting and my clinical practice and my responsibilities at Brown, I was just like, ah, it's too much. So that's really the moment where I was like, okay, if I say yes to this thing, I really do need to say no.

And not just, no, but I need to remove some things so that the things that I do, I can do in a way that really matters to me. And so that's the last thing that I'll say, which is, you know, we talk so much on this podcast about values. And so for me, really showing up in the roles in a way that really reflects how I wanna be most in this world, which is, you know, effective and present and thoughtful and well-informed.

That really gets hampered if I'm getting pulled in too many directions because I'm feeling behind and scrambled and distracted and dropping balls. And so for that reason, it was really important to kind of pause and really take stock. And I came back to this idea that really brought me to the podcast in the first place, which is really a values question that we ask of our clients when we do acceptance and commitment therapy, which is, you know, On your tombstone, what do you want it to say?

Or at your eulogy, what do you want people to say about you? And for me, there's just something about writing that is so core to what I wanna stand for. Like communicating through the written word is something that feels very profound to me. I think because books have really transformed my life in so many ways that I just keep coming back to that.

That's really at the core of what I wanna do, even though I really enjoy podcasting.

**Jill Stoddard:** I mean, it makes so much sense because with podcasting, the love of books is present because you get to read so many books and talk to the people who wrote those books. But you're talking about other people's writing versus doing your own. And I think going back to what you were just saying before, that is like there's a reason that there's a phrase, Jack of all trades, master of none, or I think I joked on one of our other episodes

for me it would be a Jill of all trades, master of None. But that's really what you're talking about, is if you take on too many things, then you know you're really not doing any of them as well as you would like to, and, and I think it would benefit all of us to really take a look at where we're spending our time, how we're spending our time, how that is or isn't values aligned.

Especially for pe you know, Debbie's writing a book on burnout. You can probably, uh, or you've already written the book. It's pretty much done at this point. So you can speak to this better than I, but if you're feeling exhausted and stressed and you're not finding joy in things that you used to enjoy it, it may be a sign that you're like overstretched and, and need to think about having Yale be a model for

**Debbie Sorensen:** Yes.

thinking

**Jill Stoddard:** about what's essential and subtracting what isn't and how that aligns with values.

**Debbie Sorensen:** I've, I did that when I was writing the burnout book, which is that I didn't really subtract much, and so I was trying to cram in writing time into every little nook and cranny, you know, wake up at 5:00 AM or write on a Saturday when I'd rather be hanging out with my family. And I can tell you the personal toll of that is high because then you don't have time to take care of yourself and have downtime.

And so I do think that you're very wise, Yael, if you really prioritize writing and need to make room for it to be really deliberate about that. And, podcasting it takes hours. I mean, it takes so many hours of time doing all the behind the scenes work and not to mention the prep and the interviews, and so it's gonna free up a lot for you. Valuable writing time.

**Jill Stoddard:** It's probably a good spot to mention too, since you just brought up the newsletter that you're writing with Brad and Steve, that for our listeners



who want to still keep tabs on you and to be able to follow your work, that that's a great place that they can stay connected to you.

Do you wanna give like the website that if people wanted to sign up for the newsletter, they could do that?

**Yael Schonbrun:** Thank you for that nod. And if people want to sign up for it, you can find a link through. My website, which is yaelschonbrun.com. If you go on there, you'll find the signup really easily.

But to come back to this values question, what I think is really important to note is that it is really such an important thing to be clear on what you wanna stand for, because it does help you to tolerate the discomfort of making difficult decisions. And I will say that throughout this summer, I've had to repeatedly come back to that, you know, why am I making this choice?

Because I'm really not sure it's a good choice. I'm letting go of this thing that has been such an important, nourishing, fun part of my life For, about six years now. And I don't really feel like I have perfect clarity on what that decision is gonna mean for my writing career.

It's not like I make this decision not to podcast and now I'm assured huge writing success. I'm, I'm not sure about that at all. And so coming back to the process, this sort of moment to moment thing of what I wanna stand for, which is, you know, trying to be as thoughtful and well-informed of a writer as I can be writing about the topics that I care most about.

Which is relationships is so important to how I wanna show up. And deciding to devote more time and mental energy to it is how I can do that. And along the way, it's okay if I have a lot of self-doubt and uncertainty and it's also, it's gotta be okay too if it doesn't turn out the way that I fantasize about it turning out because I don't have perfect control over that.

But I do have control over how I show up day to day and what I focus on and how I approach the work that I care about.

**Jill Stoddard:** You're holding the outcome lightly.

**Yael Schonbrun:** Yes, I'm trying.

**Jill Stoddard:** which we've talked about on the podcast a number of times, but I think we can all use a reminder of that, that we live in a, a culture, at least in the

United States, where success is, really defined by whether you achieve a specific outcome.

And I think that that's really a mistake because so often we don't control the outcome. You can be the world's best writer. You can carve out the time 'cause a lot of this is really about logistics and trying to carve out time for you to spend on this activity that's so important to you. And you can do everything right.

There are still a lot of factors that contribute to who makes it or doesn't make it. And even that's not really the right verbiage 'cause what does it even mean to make it? But whether you achieve the outcome that you want to achieve when it comes to writing you know, so much of that is out of our control.

So I think you really do have to hold those outcomes lightly and focus on the process and the values. It's the only way to do it.

**Debbie Sorensen:** And I think that what you just said also speaks to the loss behind making that decision to go one direction versus another, or to subtract track something. And I think that's part of the emotional experience of leaving something behind or making a decision saying yes, say no to something in order to say yes to something else, is that there is loss.

And I think there's loss of you leaving a podcast. And part of that is the podcast itself and the professional thing that this is. But then there's also the personal elements of it in terms of the team and what it means to you. And I'm certainly feeling that sense of loss with you going.

**Yael Schonbrun:** Y. Yeah,

I think that's so well said and so important to note that like we will. The three of us and, and Michael behind the scenes continue to be friends. I have no doubt of that, but it does change the way our dynamic works because I'm no longer a part of this integral team and there's so much day-to-day interaction that we have over text and email about the logistics that is connecting.

Like we, we are doing work, but the work itself is quite connecting and there's like a real sense of loss around that and. I'll also just mention that we started a book club through the podcast and we got to interact with some of the people who enjoy reading psychology books who are fans of the podcast, and I miss those people too. Like there's, there's a lot of interpersonal loss. That has come along with this choice that has been hard for me to bear and I think that's

actually probably the hardest piece for me because a lot of my professional life is more isolated, you know, the writing and the private practice.

And so that part has been, I, I will just admit it's been pretty painful.

This feels like therapy.

**Jill Stoddard:** yeah, well it's it, but it also really speaks to how much it's mattered to you. I mean, and that, like, that's always I think what pain, we, we so badly wanna run away from pain when really often pain is this like signal that we need to pay attention to that like your connections matter to you, your friendships matter to you.

Nerding out about books with other people who like to

**Yael Schonbrun:** Oh, totally. That matters deeply to me.

**Jill Stoddard:** Right? Yeah. And, and like, so those things are important and there aren't enough hours in the day to possibly do all of the things that matter to us sometimes and that comes with different levels of pain.

What I keep thinking about is I used to do a lot more volunteering at my kids' school, and that's one of the things that I decided to subtract. And so the feeling for me, it's not less loss, it's guilt, you know, it's that story about not being a good mom and I have no idea whether this is the quote unquote right thing to do or not.

And I continue to feel guilty and I also recognize that it's not permanent. I also recognize that I spend quality time with my kids in many other ways that is fulfilling for them and for me. And, you know, in ways that volunteering at school Didn't feel fulfilling, but it's just, you know, I think there are just so many examples that you just can't do it all, even when the things feel important and you have to prioritize and that can be a painful experience.

Yeah.

**Yael Schonbrun:** Yeah, it's painful and it's clarifying. I think both, and I'll just speaking of nerding out about books that have psychology themes to them, I just recently read a book called, it Goes So Fast by Mary Louise Kelly, who's an N P R reporter. She was a foreign correspondent for a number of years including when her kids were very, very young.

And she so poignantly about the decision about , devoting time and traveling for work when you have young kids. To the opposite side. She actually took a year off when her kids were really young because one of them had needs that needed a parent around in a moring way. And she has this scene where she bumps into another journalist in the park and she feels all this envy and almost like embarrassment that she's not wearing her high heels often an important meeting, you know, in the capitol building. And later that journalists let her know that. The entire 24 hours after they met in the park, she cried and felt so badly about her choice to work instead of be at home. And it just kind of speaks to decisions are hard and when we choose one thing, when we fully show up to one thing, we're necessarily not showing up to another thing.

And, and as I write about and work parent thrive, that doesn't mean that the two things can't enrich each other. But in that one moment, You are where you are and you're not where you're not, and that is a tough choice and sometimes hard to tolerate.

**Jill Stoddard:** Yeah, there are always opportunity costs, but I think we make the mistake of, of sometimes making decisions in an effort to avoid the opportunity cost, kind of a more like a move away from pain rather than really being thoughtful about the move toward.

**Debbie Sorensen:** It's so interesting to me because we all have topics that we gravitate toward based on our personal and professional interest. I feel like we're coming full circle with Yael because this is what you first came on the podcast to talk about all those many years ago, and this has been a theme running throughout so many of your episodes, and to hear you at this point, reflecting back on it, having made this really hard decision, it does feel like we've kind of watched you go through this journey for yourself and grapple with it and use the podcast to think it through and have kind of come to this new stage for yourself.

You're really just demonstrating what you've been so passionate about all along

**Jill Stoddard:** Walk in the talk baby.

**Debbie Sorensen:** That's right. Yeah.

**Yael Schonbrun:** Oh, thank you guys. I mean, I, I do have to say it's, it really says a lot about friendship, that you guys can be supportive of a decision that let me, Make this clear has caused a lot of work for you and a lot of upheaval in your professional lives because I'm leaving. So for you guys to support me in making this change just says a lot about your character, but also I think about

our friendship and our ability to support each other even when the choices that one of us, in this case me, makes, uh, causes life to be a lot harder for the other people.

**Jill Stoddard:** I appreciate you saying that, and I also wanna acknowledge that you have really gone out of your way to try to minimize that. I mean, you told us, I don't remember when May or June May, I think, and here you still are at the end of August, right? It wasn't like, you know what you guys, I'm done.

Here's my two weeks notice. It was like, let's work together to figure out how to make this transition go as smoothly as possible so that you were really aware of like not wanting to just sort of like leave us in a lurch. And of course we appreciate that so much, and I think that speaks to the friendship, the relationship aspect of it too.

**Debbie Sorensen:** I was thinking about this from the perspective of me and Jill. In terms of the stages of grief model, you know, Kubler Ross, that model, which I think people, we all know that grief is not a linear process. I think that that's clear. But I was thinking about my own experience. You know, you announced that you're leaving and I think at first there was definitely some de denial and bargaining.

And by that I mean literally Yael. Like can you stay till. August or September. You know what, if you go on sabbatical and then come back, what if you do less work day to day? You know, there was that kind of back and forth. I think there was a little bit of denial. 'cause behind the scenes we'd be like, I don't know.

I feel like she might change her mind. I mean, we said that a

**Yael Schonbrun:** I didn't know that. That's funny.

**Jill Stoddard:** Well and clearly I'm still in denial. I've only been in the denial stage, I think as my calendar will attest.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Did we go through anger? Not super anger, I think because we love Yael so much and we do understand and support her. But I don't know, maybe there was a little anger in there somewhere, but mostly it was,

**Jill Stoddard:** I'll tell you where my anger is. You already know, 'cause I said who are these people you interviewed that contributed to this decision? Who are the people I need to go yell at? So my anger is not directed at Yael. It's Leidy and Annie

**Debbie Sorensen:** Watch out Jill's after you now. Yeah, but I actually did come to a place of acceptance, I think, and I, that's where I am now. It took a little while, but I'm like, I know that Yael is leaving. I'm happy for you. I know that the podcast will be okay and that we can handle this change and transition and this loss.

And at this point I do feel it took me some time, but at this point, I do feel ready for the change and will of course, miss Yael so much, but I, I'm at a place of acceptance. How about you?

**Jill Stoddard:** I, I'm getting there. I don't think I'm there yet, but I also feel like a lot of excitement and optimism. So Yael is leaving, but she's not leaving just Debbie and me behind. We will have new co-hosts taking her place and they will be introduced to you in our next episode.

And what I love about who's joining us, we'll tease it a little bit. We're not gonna tell you who it is till next time. But when the three of us came up with names like these, were the two people at the top of all three of our lists separately. And that's really based on kind of personality and for listeners who love Yael, we want to, for them to have kind of a similar experience for who's gonna work really well with us behind the scenes and our team. And that's already playing out. So I feel excited for our listeners to meet the new co-hosts.

I'm already happy to be working with the new co-host behind the scene. It's a lot of emotions all at once, which I guess is also kind of consistent with grief, with a grief model, right? Because there's like, of course, the sadness and the loss. But you know, also this like hope about what's around the corner in our future.

This is like our what, third or fourth? Fifth, sixth, P o t c, 6.0, something like that with people who have kind of come and gone and it's never been a problem. With every change the podcast has gone through, even though it's uncertain, even though there's like some fear about how it's gonna turn out, I feel like it's gotten better and better and better over time.

So I just, I have a lot of hope and optimism for what the future holds too.

**Yael Schonbrun:** I will say that's where my anger comes in because I'm like pissed that I'm gonna miss the fun. I will be your most loyal, devoted president of the fan club person, but I'm gonna miss the behind the scenes fun, and I'm pissed about it because it is, it's gonna be awesome. I am really looking forward to the next iteration of psychologists off the clock.

I, I really do think it's gonna be even better, more interesting, more thoughtful, more powerful, and more fun. So I'm really looking forward to listening and I'm really angry that it won't be a part of it, even though I did it to myself.

**Debbie Sorensen:** This is

like a

**Jill Stoddard:** you replace me.

**Debbie Sorensen:** guys

**Yael Schonbrun:** I have so many feelings.

**Debbie Sorensen:** our feelings on the air.

**Yael Schonbrun:** It's true.

**Jill Stoddard:** Well, I would like to take a moment just to express, like true gratitude for you Yael, and not just you as a human, but you as a podcaster. I think it's really interesting the way you started out talking about how, like you didn't even really know what podcasts were, and you certainly didn't think of podcasting as being something that would be part of your future career.

And yet, like you jumped into this thing and you just killed it and I know it's hard for you to hear positive feedback, but you are really good at this, and you also know that I don't say that stuff if I don't believe it, right? Like

**Yael Schonbrun:** It's true. I would probably poo poo anybody saying it except for you.

**Jill Stoddard:** No, really?

**Yael Schonbrun:** What's your, what's your, what's your, nickname?

**Jill Stoddard:** Destructively honest, Jill.

**Yael Schonbrun:** Destructively Honest Jill.



**Jill Stoddard:** But as I always feel the need to say, my friend Halle always says, no, it's constructively honest, Jill. Like, I'm not just gonna be a jerk to you, right? But

**Yael Schonbrun:** you speak truth and in ways that many people are sometimes afraid to.

**Jill Stoddard:** And I don't, you know, like blow sunshine if it's disingenuous. So if I'm giving you a compliment, then you can trust that I really genuinely mean it.

And I think what I appreciate most, I mean, there's lots of things. You have just a lovely interview style and I know that you still, after all these years, still get nervous, especially if it's a guest that you really admire and look up to. Although you can't tell that really in the interviews, but I

**Yael Schonbrun:** Of editing. Editing 'cause of editing.

**Jill Stoddard:** I.

**Yael Schonbrun:** Thanks.

**Debbie Sorensen:** out the nervousness,

just snip it right out of there.

**Jill Stoddard:** it's, I've like for, well, of course I appreciate when your expertise comes into the episode. So especially our episodes on parenting, relationships, those kinds of things you know, you can hear your passion when you are really excited about a topic and I don't, maybe I should ask you this question.

It comes across as if you just like pull these like statistics out of the air. Like you just know them, but maybe you're preparing for the interviews in advance where you're like, I'm gonna talk about this article, or this study, or this book. But I think that's something you do a much better job than Debbie and I, I hope that's okay to say Debbie.

But you know, you, you do a really good job of really pulling in the research and the science in all of your topics. And of course we really only interview people when there's a science backing to what it is we're talking about. But I think you really add to that by talking about studies outside of just whatever it is you're reading in the guest's book.



And, I hope one of our new co-hosts who is quite similar to you in many ways, may end up having the same kind of talent, but that's something that I've really appreciated about your episodes in particular.

**Yael Schonbrun:** I do think that it's a little bit of my anxiety driving over preparation, and also just the fact that I'm a science nerd. I love that stuff, so it's fun for me to dive into the research .

**Jill Stoddard:** and it shows it's not like I'm just gonna throw these stats out there to sound smart. It's like, I'm so excited about this, and that really comes through, I think when you listen to your interviews.

**Debbie Sorensen:** I wanna piggyback on what Jill's saying here, because I can't even begin to express how grateful I am to Yael. I mean, if nothing else, just for the number of hours of time, energy, blood, sweat, and tears that you've put into

**Jill Stoddard:** Unpaid time, energy, blood, sweat, and tears. Can I just like throw that out there?

**Debbie Sorensen:** I can say with certainty, we wouldn't have been able to keep it going this long if it wasn't for just how much work and passion we all put into it.

And you've been on this team for a long time and have really helped shape it into what it is. You've done terrific interviews. You've made amazing connections with people like Yael stays friends with our guests, some of them,

**Yael Schonbrun:** I use it to build my social life.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Yeah. And, but that's actually, I think the thing that I am most grateful for is that I felt so many times, like, you were such a supporter to me.

You were kind of like my partner in crime. You know, when we'd go through the ups and downs, like the emotional rollercoaster ride of this experience. There's just been so many times when I felt like I know you were there for me. Like truly a friend, we always kind of joke that we're kindred spirits. We have a lot in common.

We even have the same birthday, September 24th.

**Jill Stoddard:** That's right.

**Debbie Sorensen:** So we just have this connection and we've met in person only a few times, but our connection runs so deep. I am so grateful. I feel like I've learned a lot from you. We've grappled with some hard stuff together, but I'm just mostly grateful for your support and friendship.

I just feel very fortunate to have had this opportunity. I didn't know you at all before the podcast. We met through Diana, and so this podcast is what brought us together and I'm so grateful.

**Jill Stoddard:** How many times. I know we've said this in other episodes, but I still think it's so interesting, like how many times have you and Yael met in person in the last six years?

**Debbie Sorensen:** Twice,

We hope to

make that more soon. I think

if it wasn't for Covid, it would've been more than that, but you know, we've met, only met in person twice, but we're like, most of the time we're in pretty much daily, at least multiple times a week we're in contact, so,

**Yael Schonbrun:** yeah. yeah. And it's amazing because even though our friendship grew around the podcast, we really have been there for each other through like parent illnesses and, other transitions, like kid transitions and outside of the podcast, professional transitions and, we've been there for each other through so much and work brings people together and you know, sometimes you click and sometimes you don't. But this has been a place where I've really found my people to connect with that really get me on so many levels.

It's not easy to find people who appreciate geeking out about science and psychology. So that's one level. But also people who have similar values and want to open up and share and, and connect more deeply on more personal things. And we had an episode with Adam Dorsey about friendship and this podcast is really brought so much richness in the friendship world, which is so important, I think can be really hard to access as adults.

**Jill Stoddard:** We've also had this unexpected special connection where we have all written a book during the time that we've been working together on this podcast, and when you care about writing and you care about getting messages

that matter to you out into the world and it's something you've created, it is incredibly vulnerable.

Like if I had to make a spreadsheet and put it out in the world, I don't think I'd worry about it that much. But when you're writing, and podcasting is creating too. But I think anytime you're putting something creative out into the world, it is one of the most vulnerable experiences you can have and when it matters to you, you so badly want it to go well.

And it is an emotional experience. And that's something that I think has been such a gift that we've been able to support each other through that because we've all done it at different times, right? So when Yael was really anxious about her book and maybe doing a tiny bit of reassurance seeking around that time, understandably, just a little Debbie and I could be there, you know, to genuinely try to support and lift her up, you know, support the book and get the word out about the book, but also to provide that care and reassurance during a time that we understand is really, you feel really raw, right? During, during that time it's really scary. And now, you know, Yael is, I, my book is coming out in I think three weeks and then Debbie's is coming out a few months after that. And so we've had this staggered experience where we've all gotten to see each other through, even help each other with our writing and then be supportive during that whole launch process and it, that can feel like a, a otherwise lonely time when, because not people who don't write don't necessarily really get it. And we've all had that experience of like we really get how each other feels, which has been awesome.

**Yael Schonbrun:** I am so glad that you brought that one specific piece up 'cause I do think that that has been a, a really, Powerful place where we've been able to support each other. And it's true, like at every phase of it. Jill, you read every piece of the book before I sent it to my editor because I was like, I can't send it unless I have Jill's eyes on it at first. And yes, I was definitely doing reassurance seeking, but you gave me constructively honest feedback, which was so helpful and it did give me confidence to go forward and trust myself because I had you in my corner. And I think that is something that's so powerful about friendship is that it helps you to feel more confident in yourself when you know that you have wonderful, smart, loving people by your side.

**Jill Stoddard:** And at a time where you don't have confidence, like other people can like hold you up and like push you through even when you're feeling just completely racked with self-doubt, like you have those people to really lean on during difficult times.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Yeah. And we have all, I think I've learned so much from the two of you about some of the nuts and bolts of writing. I think the feedback that we've given each other and just the, the support, but also the like, kind of pushing each other a little bit. I think we've seen that with writing, but then also with some, some of the things we've grappled with behind the scenes with the podcast, like hard decision we had to make and being thoughtful about some of the choices we've made over the years and hard conversations we've had. And I think it's helpful to go back and forth with each other, to hash things out, but then also to kind of push each other a little bit sometimes outside of our comfort zone or to know that, okay, we're secure in we can handle this.

We're there for each other even when things get hard. 'cause sometimes they do. You know, we have to make some hard decisions. We have to deal with some hard challenges that come our way. So it's really helpful to have that support, but then also have that kind of nudge from each other sometimes.

**Jill Stoddard:** and the trust too. Like I'm thinking back to, well two things. One that I feel like my book that's coming out in September is much better than my last book, and I think that is only slightly to do with me and like everything to do with you guys. I mean, I feel like your feedback on early drafts made it the book I wanted it to be, not the book that I would've written had I not had your feedback. But the other thing I just thought about was when I was like making a big career decision about whether to do something I felt really excited about or not, and I really was stuck and wasn't sure if I should do it.

And it was Yael's advice, like you just had this brilliant wisdom where you like encouraged me to really focus on like me and my values and my platform and what I wanted to be about in the world, rather than sort of like doing someone else's work, like promoting someone else's platform. And it was really impactful and it is what helped me to make that decision.

And that is an example where I will say I feel quite certain that, that I turned that opportunity down and I feel quite certain that that was the right decision for me, and it was like at a time where I was just like so uncertain and felt like I was being, you know, there were just as many pros as there were cons, and I just didn't know where to go. To have that like wisdom from Yael was, it was just really impactful and I'm so, I'm so grateful.

**Yael Schonbrun:** , so we often talk about the core process of values clarification, but I was just thinking that one of the things that you guys have taught me is how to attach values to committed action in ways that I sometimes struggle with.

So , for example, I, I value us being assertive and I also value being kind. And I think the combination of the two of you has really guided me into figuring out how does that look in everyday life.

**Jill Stoddard:** What you're saying is we've again, shot ourselves in the foot because if you hadn't gotten more assertive, then you wouldn't have left the podcast. Damn it.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Acceptance. Jill, keep working on it. It's a process though, right? Yeah.

**Yael Schonbrun:** I know every time you guys say that, I'm like, but maybe I'll come back. No, I the other thing that I'm actually working on, and you two have made it very, very hard. Just, I often will make a decision and then I'll get pushback from people that I love.

I'll totally cave and this is actually something that Andy Duke talks about she, she talks about identifying kill criteria for a choice that you've made, and then at the end of the time period where you're evaluating these exit criteria or kill criteria, then you can revisit the decision, but you don't revisit it every day.

But it's so hard 'cause when you guys say things like that, I'm like, Hmm, well maybe, but no, I gotta. I have to give it a chance, and I think that that is another part of decision making that is hard for lots of people, including me, is like to make the decision, give yourself a certain amount of time, collect data, and use that time to really do your best to make that choice work well for you.

Easier said than done.

**Jill Stoddard:** Yeah. And I think if all of the things that led you to that decision are still in place, right? If like nothing has really changed to stick with that decision because you're making a good decision based on. The best information and to not backtrack, just because you're having feelings, right?

Because you feel sad or guilty or experiencing loss, that you know that's gonna be, if you backtrack and go back on the decision, you're still gonna have those feelings just for a different reason,

**Yael Schonbrun:** right?

**Jill Stoddard:** right? Like so, so that to like not let, trying to escape that pain ever be in charge of, of those choices.

And that really requires a lot of willingness. Well, ladies, I'm looking at the time clock here and I wish that we could just keep going forever 'cause you know, denial. But we're coming to the end of our time and our episode. Um, It's very bittersweet y. We love you so much and we wish you the absolute best and can't wait to see where your journey takes you.

And of course, when your next book comes out, you must come back and be a guest again on P O T C and your next book after that, and your next book after that.

**Yael Schonbrun:** I hope so, and in the meantime I'll be listening with delight and excitement and only a little bit of anger that I'm not actually doing it behind the scenes.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Well, and be sure listeners, that you do stay tuned for next week so that you can find out our next steps that we are excited about. Here's the sweet part of the bittersweet is that we are gonna, the show must go on and we're going to continue and we are excited for our new chapter. So make sure you take a listen to the next episode

**Jill Stoddard:** and

we'll link to all of, we'll link to Yel so people can continue to find her even when she's not on P O T C anymore.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Her newsletter is terrific.

I read it every time it comes out. So you definitely wanna sign up for that. Don't miss it. And Yael, we truly on behalf, I think of everyone on the team. All of our listeners just wish you the best with your life and your career and your writing, and we will miss you.

**Yael Schonbrun:** I will miss you guys too. Thank you both for everything that you've given me, and thank you to our audience for the support. The fact that you listened to our show has made my life richer. The fact that you've participated and engaged with us has been such a gift. It's really been such an honor, pleasure, such a gift to have been a part of this.

So thank you guys so much.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Thank you,

**Jill Stoddard:** Bye.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Bye.

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