

David Glasgow Say the Right Thing

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That was David Glasgow 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 [00:01:00] 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.

I'm here with Debbie to introduce today's episode with David Glasgow about his book, say The Right Thing, how to Talk about Identity, diversity, and Justice. And I really appreciated this conversation because David really gives some. Concrete advice around what we tend to do when we have difficult identity conversations , and basically what not to do and how we can do things better.

So Debbie, what was your reaction to the episode?

Debbie Sorensen: Well, I'm really glad that you brought David on. I think this was a terrific conversation and I, I love, yes, [00:02:00] there are some strategies for what to do, what not to do, but you also just touched on a number of really important. Topics related to having conversations about diversity and identity and justice. So I really appreciate that and I do appreciate having some ideas for how to have these conversations because. You know, they can be scary and emotionally loaded for people. Um, and I, there was one of the topics that came up in the conversation that I just kind of wanted to talk about a little bit more in the co-host intro, cuz I thought it was really important and really interesting. And that is, you know, when we have some emotional discomfort around having these hard conversations. And of course, I mean, these conversations can be painful. They can. There can be anger and fear and shame that shows up and one of the things he talks about, he talks about, okay, what do you do with your discomfort?

Like are you channeling it to the right place? And he has this idea, you'll hear in the episode about the rings and [00:03:00] like, who do you go to when you're feeling discomfort? And sometimes we kind of misplace that and put the burden of our discomfort. If we're in a more privileged group, we might place that burden of our discomfort. On, you know, the, maybe the person of color or the person who is in the more marginalized group. And it reminded me, I recently saw this documentary, they did a screening of it in Denver called Deconstructing Karen, and it features the work of these two women, Regina Jackson and Cyra Rao, who they also have a book, which I've read called White Women. you already know about your own racism and how to do better, highly recommend both the documentary and the book if anyone wants to do more of this kind of work, which if you're listening, I assume you want to do better. Um, But what's so interesting is that, , Regina and Cyra have these dinners with a group of white women and they come together and they talk very candidly and [00:04:00] openly about racism and about their experience of white women.

And ultimately they are trying to help white women do better, right?

Jill Stoddard: Mm-hmm.

Debbie Sorensen: , they're trying to teach them some things and to, you know, you, we really need to be talking about this. Things are going to change,

Jill Stoddard: That what a cool idea that is. That's really, really interesting. I would love to participate in something like that, or, well, I would be terrified to participate in something like that. And isn't that kind of the whole point?

And David talks about the democratization of discomfort and how, you know, we've arrived at a place where we can't expect just the marginalized people to be the ones shouldering the discomfort and being in charge of. Uh, kind of moderating these conversations that, you know, we all, especially people who are in positions of privilege or power, need to take on some of this burden.

And I, I love that. I think that's, that's such an interesting idea and I give them a lot of credit for taking that [00:05:00] on. And I give the women who attend a lot of credit for being willing to have those convers.

Debbie Sorensen: Right. I mean, it is I think, a courageous thing to do on both ends and you see one of the dinners actually in the film if you watch the documentary and one part of it. So there's a lot of really fascinating things about this work. Like if you, you get into it, if you go to a dinner or if you just read the book or watch the documentary, it's very interesting.

But one piece of it is related to this idea of emotional discomfort, because what often happens is that conversations. instance about race, end up centering on the comfort of the white person,

Jill Stoddard: Right.

Debbie Sorensen: either the white person is so shocked by all the racism that they've experienced, and then their shock becomes the center. Or you know, their tears that come up when they feel ashamed or sad or called out. And basically in part of these dinners is to say, That's not helpful to [00:06:00] us. We need you to kind of hold that and stick with this conversation. If not, you need to leave the room and then come back when you can participate in the conversation.

Because what they're trying to avoid is what so often happens, which is that they then up then end up in the position of comforting the white person, or

Jill Stoddard: Right,

Debbie Sorensen: gets shut down because there's that, you know, that idea of white fragility, it's like,

Jill Stoddard: right.

Debbie Sorensen: it, so we can't talk about this and. We're not gonna get anywhere if that's the case. And so I think that it's really in this conversation, it's great to think about this in a new way and to have some of those tools. How do you wade into this? How do you hold your discomfort so that we can move forward?

Jill Stoddard: Yeah, and David talks about this idea of ally tears, which is exactly what you're TA talking about with these other resources and the importance. You know, one of the steps that he gives us for getting better at these conversations is building resilience. It's learning how to manage our own emotions on our own so that that doesn't [00:07:00] become the center of these kinds of conversations.

And he gives some tips for how to do that. And you know, like you said in the beginning, he brings up I think, so many kind of hot button topics. We talk about cancel culture and kind of his views about cancel culture.

Um, we talk about privilege, you know, that, that, that word privilege, that's become kind of a buzzword. And the definition, like actually what it re what it does and doesn't actually mean. , and a number of other, I think really important and timely. Topic. So we hope you enjoy this episode with David Glasgow.

Hey everybody, it's Jill here and I'm excited to introduce my guest today, David Glasgow. We're gonna be talking about his book, say The Right Thing, how to Talk about Identity, diversity, and Justice. And I think this is such an incredibly important topic, especially where we seem to be living in a much more divided society where these conversations about identity have become [00:08:00] very difficult.

So I think this is gonna be a great interview today.

David Glasgow is the executive director of the Meltzer Center for Diversity, inclusion and Belonging, and an adjunct professor at NYU School of Law. He has written for a range of publications, including the Harvard Business Review, HuffPost and Slate, and served as an associate director of the Public Interest Law Center at n NYU School of Law.

He is the co-author with Kenji Yoshino of Say The Right Thing, how to Talk About Identity, diversity, and Justice. David, welcome. I'm so glad to have you here on Psychologist Off the Clock.

David Glasgow: Well, thank you so much for having me.

Jill Stoddard: . So I thought where we could start, , is before we jump into to the, the content of the book, if you could tell us a little bit about you.

So what led you to this specific type of work, , and who you wrote this book for?

David Glasgow: Absolutely. So my background is actually as a lawyer. So I trained in Australia and practiced employment and labor and anti-discrimination [00:09:00] law. Uh, but I was never really sort of in love with the law and I was always much more interested in deeper issues of social justice and equality and inclusion that the law can help address but not sort of fully solve on its own.

And I was always interested in how do you build cultures and societies that are inclusive or everyone has a sense of belonging. Over and above whatever the legal requirements are. Cuz as a lawyer, you're so often just thinking about, you know, is this gonna get a business in trouble? Or, or a person in trouble in, in a courtroom or something and not thinking so much about, you know, what else can we do to treat people with dignity and respect?

And so I entered this field of diversity, equity, and inclusion really in an attempt to do that additional work of what, what the law can't really achieve on its own. And I was drawn to it both for that professional reason and also just for, you know, personal reasons. I'm, I'm a gay man myself. I remember growing up feeling a kind of lack [00:10:00] of belonging in my own life.

And I wanted to be able to think about how to create more inclusive cultures, not just for people like me, but for other people who might be experiencing a lack of belonging in other areas. And so why, you know, who we wrote this book for is really intended for any person of goodwill who wants to learn how to engage in more effective conversations about issues of identity, diversity, and justice.

So it's a really broad intended audience. It's really sort of anyone who cares about, you know, treating people with inclusion and respect, but is maybe fearful of getting it wrong, fearful of saying the wrong thing, and just need some guidance for how to do it effect.

Jill Stoddard: Yeah, I love it. Well, and and that's a perfect segue, and you may have just answered the question really in, in that final part there. , because I think so many of us care, you know, so many of us are the right audience for

this book. , and yet these conversations about identity, , seem to be so hard, and so you just mentioned [00:11:00] fear. Is there anything else? Like what makes these conversations so hard? Why do we shy away from having them?

David Glasgow: So a big thing that's changed, I think recently is what the social psychologist, Jennifer Richardson calls the democratization of discomfort. So she points out that, you know, historically, Members of, you know, marginalized groups. If you're a person of color, a member of the L G B T Q community, a woman, , these conversations have really been uncomfortable for a very long time.

For you, it's just that you may not have had the power to be able to speak up and challenge some of the ways that these conversations are conducted. And so over the, you know, the past decade or so, a big shift that's happened is we've had a tremendous number of social movements, right? L G B T Q movement, me too.

Black Lives Matter, stop Asian hate, and on and on. And as a result, um, of that courageous activism, even members of more historically dominant or majority groups are starting to feel [00:12:00] tremendous discomfort in these conversations as well. So they're now feeling. Oh my goodness. What if I, you know, say something that offends or hurts someone I care about, or what if I get canceled?

So it's, so the stakes of these conversations just seem to have gotten a lot higher for people. I think that's a big reason why people are finding it challenging. Another is generational. So, you know, younger generations coming through are being raised in much more diverse environments and much more fluent and comfortable with the language of identity, and they're often entering environments and bringing these conversations to the fore in ways that are making some members of older generations feel uncomfortable.

So in researching the book, I remember a corporate leader telling me that, You know, his experience in his workplace is that young people are coming in as new hires and they're saying things to, to their bosses, their colleagues, like, you know, we need to talk about the white supremacy and racism in this workplace.

And people in the workplace from older generations react to that with, as you say, tremendous [00:13:00] fear of, oh my goodness, are you telling us we're all racists and white supremacists? What's going on here? And so I think that that generational conflict and misunderstanding is also contributing to this difficulty.

Jill Stoddard: Yeah, absolutely. And I wanna talk a little bit about that language in a minute. You know that word white supremacist, that how it conjures certain ideas about what this means and, and whatnot. But I, you brought up cancel culture and, and so it, seems like people are uncomfortable partly because you said generationally, these conversations are new.

But this other piece is that there's so much fear. And one thing I was thinking as I was reading is, you know, in a way this is sort of a good sign because it, it means we deeply care about our communities and about our connections, right? Like, we wouldn't have fear if we didn't worry about offending someone or being canceled, as you say.

And you know, so it seems like we just need more effective ways of navigating these conversations, which is exactly what the entire book is about. But I [00:14:00] wanna talk about this canceled thing, because I think that is one of the big fears, right? There's the fear. Just, you know, you and me as a dyad, if we have a relationship, I don't wanna offend you, I don't want it to ruin our relationship, but on a larger level, it's that fear that I'm gonna make such a big mistake, like my life will be over it.

And I'm, I'm curious what your thoughts are about cancel culture.

David Glasgow: Yeah. So, you know, as you say, you know, we actually welcome the democratization of discomfort. I think it's a good thing, um, that people from more dominant or majority groups are feeling uncomfortable. I don't think it's fair that the burden of these conversations should only fall on one side. So, you know, the reason we wrote the book is, as you say, really not to tell people you shouldn't feel uncomfortable at all, but rather to give some people practical tools for navigating it so that even though they feel uncomfortable, they can still show up and engage effectively in these conversations.

But, you know, as you point out, I think one barrier is this, um, fear of cancellation. And we argue in the book [00:15:00] that. We sort of wanna hit the pause button on cancel culture in most situations. So of course there are going to be instances where canceling someone is the appropriate response if they've done something truly egregious or they're repeatedly doing something bad, even though you've, you know, they've been canceled and, you know, given tools to do better.

But in most ordinary situations where we're interacting with each other in, you know, workplace environments, educational environments, social environments, you know, we think it's much better to display generosity to each other when we

make mistakes and to give each other kind of tools for growing and learning, um, so that we can activate more of a growth mindset in people, which I'm sure many of your listeners are familiar with.

That basic concept from Carol Dweck's work of a growth mindset of kind of treating mistakes as opportunities to learn and thinking about this area as one in which you can actually improve through effort. It's not just a fixed, innate, you know, skill that you either have or you don't have. And cancel culture really shuts [00:16:00] down that growth mindset thinking.

You know, cancel culture really treats people as you know, you're either good or you're bad. You're either in the community or you're not in the community. And what we would much prefer to do is create a culture where we're all sort of generous to each other when we make mistakes so that we're all learning and growing together.

Jill Stoddard: Yeah, I love that. That really stood out to me. And I, I think you, if I'm remembering correctly in the book, it was, uh, Dolly Chugg, who was also a guest on our podcast to talk about, um, more, a more just future is the name of her book. And she had talked about the importance of applying the fixed versus growth mindset, specifically identity conversations.

And I mean, it just makes so much sense. And I think any of us are listeners, certainly this is true of me. I can look back of many on many instances in my own life that, to be honest, are just cringey because I didn't know better, you know, things I thought or things I said. that , you know, I think about these things in a much different way now.

I approach them differently [00:17:00] and we're all at different stages of learning and development, and this is really an ongoing process. So I, I think that point cannot be, , underestimated how, how important that really is.

David Glasgow: Yeah. And it's, and it's fascinating, Jill, to, you know, I think we all have that experience of looking back on our past and kind of cringing. But it's interesting how in other areas of life, if you're learning something new, if you're learning how to speak a new language or you're learning a musical instrument or what have you, it's inevitable that you make mistakes.

And you know, it's unlikely that you think back, oh my goodness, I can't believe that, you know, 10 years ago I missed that shot in my tennis match or something. Um, so I think that really speaks to the fact that in this domain we tend to get stuck as Dolly Chug says, in that fixed mindset where we treat our

mistakes, not as things that we can recover from, but we treat them as, you know, implicating who we are as people of sort of turning us into racists or sexists or homophobes or what have you.

And I think her point around really trying to bring that growth mindset [00:18:00] into this domain is just a crucial.

Jill Stoddard: Right. And I think it, it triggers shame. You know, when I say, Ooh, I cringe. You know what I feel is shame. And you're right. When I look the look back on learning how to ride a bike, I don't cringe or feel shame that I fell down a few times before I got the hang of it. . But I think like the, the flip side of this that is maybe making me feel kind of hopeful and optimistic, like I said before, is the reason we feel shame is because this matters to us.

Like the last thing on earth I wanna be is racist or sexist or homophobic or any of those things because I care about my fellow humans and I respect them, and I want to understand them as best I can. And you know, I think if we, if we didn't want that harmony, that community, that cooperation, all of it, then these aren't the feelings that would be triggered around these conversations.

So to me, that's like really hopeful. And now we need to figure out like how to move forward, not get into that fixed mindset and, and be willing to learn and grow and, and put ourselves out there and be vulnerable [00:19:00] and make mistakes.

David Glasgow: Yeah, I love that because you know, oftentimes when we feel negative emotions, we tend to think we need to squash it, right? If I'm feeling afraid or if I'm feeling guilty or what have you, this is bad and I need to just sort of run away from the emotion. But I think what's much healthier is to process it in the way that you just described of thinking, well, you know, if I'm feeling, you know, guilt about an error that I've just made, that indicates to me that I care about this person that I've just hurt.

And so I need to see that as a productive emotion, and it's just rather than sort of wallowing and getting stuck in self-pity and what have you, I need to think about ways to productively move forward with that.

Jill Stoddard: Right. Absolutely. Well, so let's talk a little bit about that, this, this moving forward piece. , so you. part of what gets us into trouble is when it comes to these, you know, the difficult identity conversations that were often reactive rather than being reflective, and that this typically presents as one of four [00:20:00] conversational traps.

So I'm wondering if you could talk, this is kind of the, before we get to the what to do differently, this is sort of the kind of where we get stuck. So can you talk a little bit about what those traps are, those typical ways we might respond?

David Glasgow: Yes, so we call this, uh, a d d A, which stands for Avoid, deflect, deny and Attack. And, you know, avoid is, you know what it sounds like it's, um, walking out of the room, it's going silent, looking at your phone, not really sharing what you think. It's just running away from the convers. deflect is where you change the subject.

So someone has come to you to talk about an experience of theirs, and rather than focusing on the subject that they've raised with you, you change the topic. So you focus on the tone that they use to bring it up with you and say, well, you know, you may have a point, but I really don't like the way you just put it now.

Or you change the topic to your own good intentions. Oh, I didn't mean it that way. Or something about your own moral character. Like, oh, you know, well I, I'm a good person. I grew up in a diverse [00:21:00] neighborhood, et cetera, et cetera. So that's all forms of deflection. Deny is where you stay on the subject that the person has raised with you, but you essentially put up a wall and you just reflexively dismiss whatever it is that they're telling you.

So you might dismiss the facts and just say, Nope, you're completely wrong, no questions asked. Or you might dismiss their feelings, right? So just basically treating it as well, you know, you're a snowflake and why did you, why did you get upset about that kind of denial. And then the fourth one is the most, uh, aggressive, which is an attack, which is where you turn the tables on the other person and you make it quite personal.

So you go after them with insults, sarcasm, eyerolling, that kind of behavior. And so if you think of it as almost like. Fight or flight kind of response. You know, the avoid and deflect are the flight responses running away. And then the deny and attack are more the fight responses. I'm gonna stand in my corner and fight you.

Um, but either way, you know, we think that [00:22:00] these four behaviors get in the way of true engagement with the other person. They have the effect of kind of shutting down important convers. It's.

Jill Stoddard: Yeah. And they, they make so much sense because they're protective in some way in the moment, in the short term, but in the long term. , you know, of course are not moving anything forward. Okay, so let's say you're

aware of these four traps and you really wanna do a better job of being reflective. I mean reactive is that like snap autopilot, just that thing you do without thinking. And I'm wondering if you can talk a little bit about, like, how do we start to turn down the reactivity and turn up the more reflective responding?

I mean, the, the one thing that I was thinking about is I wonder how powerful, like one slow breath would be. Like, if we could even just catch that moment and take a breath before we respond. But I'm wondering if you have like specific tips or strategies that you teach people.[00:23:00]

David Glasgow: Yeah, so I love that idea of the breath. Um, you know, we, we write a chapter on resilience in the book, and it comes immediately after the chapter on these four conversational traps because we think building that. Emotional resilience is a critical skill for overcoming this behavior. And so one, one of the components of that resilience is to try to adopt that growth mindset that we discussed.

So if you make a mistake, you feel yourself getting uncomfortable because of that mistake. You know, reframing it as, you know, I can bounce back from this mistake. It's okay that I've made the mistake. It's like I've, you know, played the wrong note on a piano piece or something, rather than I've become a horrible human being.

I think that helps address some of these behaviors. And so you can do, it's a simple sometimes as adding the word yet to the end of a sentence. So if you find yourself with a self-talk thinking, I'm just not good at pronouns, for example, in a gender identity context, you might just add the word yet and say, I'm not good at pronouns yet, but you know, I can learn [00:24:00] more, I can practice, I can get better at it.

And I think activating the growth mindset in that way can help. There's also, you know, research, um, in psychology, we draw on, uh, Robert Livingston, who's written a wonderful book called *The Conversation*, where he writes about the power of self-affirmation. So, you know, before you enter some of these conversations, if you're feeling really uncomfortable, you know, write down three things that are really important to you in your life that, that you value, that give your life meaning.

So, you know, relationships and your family accomplishments, things that make you proud of who you are. Um, those kind of affirmations may sound irrelevant to the topic that you're talking about, and in fact, it's good that they're irrelevant.

But what it does is it kind of gives you that kind of buffer of like a stronger self-concept so that when you enter these conversations, you can put your mistakes in a broader context so you can actually think, you know what, there's so much more in my life that I value that that's important to me than just getting this conversation right in this moment.

And so that self-affirmation [00:25:00] process can help. and then, you know, we have, you know, plenty of other tools in that resilience chapter as well. But just to mention one more, another one is to kind of catch yourself when you are feeling that overwhelming discomfort that makes you engage in a D D A behavior and try to identify what specific emotion that you are feeling in that moment.

So there's research on, you know, affect labeling that says, you know, just pausing to think about, well, am I feeling fear or anger or guilt or hopelessness or whatever it may be. Just naming that emotion takes some of the power of that emotional away from just kind of controlling the way that you're engaging in the conversation.

And once you've named it, you can reframe it. You can actually think, is there a more productive, affirmative way that I can think about this emotion in this conversation? So for example, let's say I confuse two people who belong to the same ethnic group with each other, and I'm feeling terrible guilt over that mistake.

Rather than kind of [00:26:00] wallowing in that guilt, think about is there a way that I can reframe that to think, well, you know, everyone makes mistakes. I'm gonna apologize and, and learn their names and do better next time. And so that exercise of naming and reframing, we think is also a powerful way to really turn down the temperature of the conversation in your own head and bring some of that a d d A behavior under control.

Jill Stoddard: Yeah. And both of those, both , the self affirmations and the labeling of the emotions, , bring self-compassion to mind for me. So self-compassion, where you're aware of your thoughts and feelings, you're suffering, , where you connect with common humanity. Like, I'm not alone here. This is something that so many people struggle with.

And self-kindness, , I'm a human being. Humans make mistakes. I'm gonna try better, or I'm gonna apologize and try better next time. You know, it fits really nicely into that frame as well. And, and, you know, cools the nervous system

and makes it more likely that you're gonna get back on [00:27:00] track and, and try to do the right thing.

David Glasgow: Yeah, absolutely. You know, and, and, and also I think it's important for people to realize that it is okay to get that emotional support. You know, oftentimes when we're entering these conversations as allies, if you belong to a historically, you know, dominant majority sort of group in these conversations, if we're well-meaning people, we can sometimes think, well, I just need to, you know, suck it up and be a superhero, and I shouldn't be feeling any of my own painful emotions in these conversations.

Whereas we argue very much as you say that, you know, having that self-compassion is important. And also getting support is important as well. It's just try not to get that support from the person in the conversation who you are there to help. Right. So again, a psychologist, uh, you know, clinical psychologist, Susan Silk has this framework called Ring Theory, where she asks people, it's, it's applied in a grief context, right?

So she asks people to imagine that. Let's say your friend has cancer. You know, imagine that that person is [00:28:00] in the center of a circle and then draw a set of concentric circles around that person. And then in each layer of the concentric circle, add the name of a person who's one step removed from the person in the middle.

So you might have, uh, cancer patient in the middle, and then you are in the next circle out as that person's friend. And then your own family and friends and your network are in the next circle out from you. And so the rule from, you know, silk's theory is to comfort in and dump out. So if you are feeling negative emotions yourself, you're allowed to dump out those emotions.

You're allowed to share it with people and say, you know, I feel horrible about this diagnosis that my friend has, but you just shouldn't do it to the friend. You shouldn't do it into the inner circle. And we apply that to this context of allyship as well, where if someone comes to you, They're sharing a painful experience of discrimination or exclusion that they're feeling.

They're pouring out their emotions to you and you are feeling a whole [00:29:00] bunch of negative emotions yourself. Definitely have self-compassion. Definitely seek support. Go back to your spouse when you get home and talk to them about it and get that G help that you need. Just try not to dump those negative emotions out to the person you are there to support, cuz

then it can kind of suck the energy away from the conversation and the focus then goes to you rather than to them.

Jill Stoddard: Right. That is so helpful. , so this makes me think about what you talk about in the book in terms of ally tears, that sometimes these conversations or situations are so hard that it can become really emotional.

But then the, the, the conversation tips so that now it's no longer about this other person's pain, this marginalized person's pain, it becomes about me and my reaction to that pain, and that the ring theory really helps to understand what to do differently in that situation. .

David Glasgow: I'm someone who's quite emotional myself. I've been in situations where I've heard people tell painful stories and I find myself tearing up in those moments. And you know, [00:30:00] that's an exercise in empathy. I think it's okay to feel those kind of emotions. I think what's important in those situations is to just be aware of what impact that might be having on the.

Dynamics of the conversation. So, you know, if you're feeling overcome by emotions to the point where, you know, the attention in the room all turns to kind of comforting you, and then the, the poor person who was raising their issue is now alone and isolated and, and left unsupported in the conversation.

Then I think in those instances, it's really powerful to just tell people, reassure people that you're okay and that you can, you know, handle, handle it, and then seek support outside the room from your own friends and family or what have you. But, you know, I, so I think, you know, it is really connected to that ring theory where I think it's okay to feel those emotions.

It's just about having a bit of self-awareness about what impact that might be having on the conversation.

Jill Stoddard: So while we're talking about building resilience, so that's you, you divide the book into seven principles. So being aware of those four [00:31:00] conversational traps is the first principle. Building resilience is the second.

And that building resilience is the idea that these identity conversations trigger intense emotions and we have to learn to, to better manage those emotions. So we don't engage in the A D D A behaviors. And so one word that has become quite loaded, and triggering, and I think that people maybe need to build resilience around is the word privilege.

And it's often misinterpreted as meaning. You've had it easy, and I think this is really important. It comes up all the time. So can you clarify for us what privilege is and is not?

David Glasgow: Absolutely. So typically when people talk about privilege, they're talking about what Sam, including Dolly Chug actually we spoke about earlier, have likened to headwinds and tailwinds. So if you imagine jogging or you're on a flight or what have you, there are sort of invisible. Headwinds or , barriers that are making it harder for you to go at the speed that you want to go at.

And then alternatively, there might be [00:32:00] tailwinds at your back that are kind of giving you these invisible boosts along the way. Now, I think one of the reasons I like that headwinds, tailwinds analogy for privilege is that it's really suggesting not that, you know, privilege gets you the whole way, right?

If you're a pilot, you can't just fly the plane entirely on the back of, of tailwinds. You still need to have the skill and to put in the effort. And you might have still worked hard and trained hard to be a pilot, and you might be excellent at flying the plane. It just means you're getting like some little invisible boosts along the way as you're flying, right?

And, and that's how I like to think about privilege is we all experience some mix of headwinds and tailwinds in our lives. So it may. example, that, you know, I, I as a, as a white man, for example, have experienced, um, you know, tailwinds on account of the fact that I'm white and I'm a man. So I have not had barriers in, no one has denied me opportunities in my life because I'm white or because I'm a man.

However, I have experienced some headwinds on account of [00:33:00] my sexual orientation, on account of being gay. And I think if everyone kind of does that little exercise of just reflecting on what are the areas in my life where I have endured hardship and had it, you know, more difficult than most people and what are some areas where maybe I haven't had it as difficult as most people.

I think that's really how I like to think about privilege is it's multi-dimensional and it's not, certainly not a definitive claim that you either have zero privilege or you have total privilege. It's really much more everyone's in that kind of messy middle.

Jill Stoddard: Yeah. I loved that metaphor so much. I found it so helpful. And the, the other one that I had heard previously is it's sort of like if we're all running a race, people are starting at different, starting points. You know, maybe you have like a head start compared to other people, but I liked this so much better.

And I, yeah, I just found it a really helpful way to, to conceptualize privilege.

I wanted to read a quote from the book that's, related to, [00:34:00] to what we're talking about here, going back to what we were saying about like white supremacy or privilege, like there are these words that are so loaded that people sort of react, they get reactive and kind of interpret.

You're saying I'm sexist, you're saying I'm homophobic, you're saying I'm racist, and, , the emotional response to that requires, um, some of that building resilience. And I wanted to read this quote. So the first part of the quote is, um, it's from the book, but you are quoting Ima au. Luk. If you are white and white supremacist society, you are racist. If you are male in a patriarchy, you are sexist. If you are able-bodied, you are ableist. If you are anything above poverty in a capitalist society, you are classist end. And then you say in the book is O luk saying all white individuals are torch wielding clans people or all men are virulent?

Misogynist? No, she's just saying it's impossible to live in a biased society without bias seeping into your beliefs and actions. It would be a miracle if you didn't internalize what psychologist [00:35:00] Beverly Daniel Tatum calls cultural smog in the same way that someone who breeds an environmental smog every day would be a medical miracle if they had no traces of it in their lungs.

On this understanding of. A person who perceives an assertive woman as bossy but perceives an equivalently assertive man as confident is sexist, no hostility toward women is required. And I, I just thought that explained things so well. Right. The, this idea of, if you hear this word white supremacist, it doesn't mean you are a torch wielding, clans person, but that we swim in these waters and there is no escaping bias when this is the sociocultural fabric of which we have been part.

So I didn't know if you had anything you wanted to say about that, but I just

David Glasgow: Yeah, yeah, absolutely. And I mean, I think this is where a lot of misunderstandings arise in identity conversations, and they can become a bit like car crashes because one side of the conversation is using these terms in that

way that you've just [00:36:00] described more as a kind of cultural smog. And then the other side of the conversation is interpreting the language to mean I'm being personally singled out as a bad person with this language.

Right? So it's the difference between saying you like most people in the society are racist versus you, unlike most people in the society are racist. And so. We kind of argue in that section of the book that it's really important for people to mind the gap between their own perception of what they're hearing and what the other person might actually be saying.

And it can be as simple as just actually having that conversation and asking, like sitting down with the person and saying, you know, hey, when you use that term before, when you describe this as racist, or you throughout the word white supremacist or sexist, or what have you, you know, what did you mean by that?

And oftentimes, you know, when you actually have that conversation, you might find that the, there isn't so much of a gap in perception as what you really think. It's just that people are using that language differently from each other.[00:37:00]

Jill Stoddard: Right. And as you were saying before, that can even be a generational difference,

David Glasgow: Absolutely. And in, yeah, and we sort of give an example of a colleague of ours, Rhonda, who's in her, you know, uh, fifties and she had an experience like that with some folks in their early twenties who came into her organization and were using a lot of this language in their emails and, and other correspondence.

And she started out by kind of freaking out about it and thinking that they were accusing her of essentially being a bigot. But when she sat down with them and just said, you know, Hey, when you're talking about this, what do you mean by that? They explained to her that they were actually. Talking about more at the systemic level of thinking about what are some of the policies and practices that we have in this workplace and how can they be improved to be more, you know, equitable and just for marginalized people in this workplace.

And that's just a much different conversation than what she was expecting where, you know, they were gonna put her on blast and tell her that she's a horrible person. Right. So I think, yeah, just making sure that you are taking the time to [00:38:00] process the feedback accurately and make sure you're on the same page with language is really important.

Jill Stoddard: Yeah. And that, that, just coming to these conversations with curiosity, openness, , a, a willingness to have a dialogue where I think what our automatic response, the reactive response is , making assumptions, you know, having judgments, being defensive, and then, you know, then we get into those four conversational traps.

Yeah. I wanted to talk about one other strategy that you talk about for building resilience, and that was what you call right-sizing feedback. So if someone calls us out on our privilege or bias or whatever it may be, you suggest that we right-size the feedback. So can you talk about what you mean by.

David Glasgow: Yeah, this is drawn from a terrific book called Thanks for the feedback, uh, where it's not really in this context of diversity and inclusion that the authors Douglas Stone and Sheila Heen write about it. But, you know, if you think about, let's say you're having a performance review at work, and your boss tells [00:39:00] you something like, you know, you need to improve your organizational skills

now your boss might just mean literally, you, you know, you need to improve your organizational skills. , you might hear that though, as an employee, as you are a terrible employee who's never gonna get promoted, right?

Because we tend to have, as humans, we blow negative feedback out of proportion and we fixate on it, and we think it means something much bigger than what it actually means to the person giving the feedback. And so we argue that you really need to carry over that same mentality of just trying to turn the volume down a little bit and think about, you know, is this ominous soundtrack playing in my head, really the truth of the feedback that the person was intending to convey to me?

Or am I blowing this feedback out of proportion? And so the way that you do that in this context is exactly like what I was just describing about the example of our friend Rhonda, which is, you know, someone gives you feedback in this domain and says you are privileged or you are racist, or whatever the case [00:40:00] may be.

your immediate reaction might be like that workplace situation of sort of blowing that out of proportion and thinking that they're saying something horrible about you. But if you just take a beat to kind of pause, I love your idea of taking a breath. You know, think about, you know, did. Maybe they did mean it like that.

Maybe they didn't mean it like that. Maybe actually ask them what they meant by the term. You can actually then create the environment in which you can process the feedback accurately and learn from it rather than letting it overwhelm you.

Jill Stoddard: Yeah, I love that. I think that's so important. We have such a tendency to personalize things. I mean, going back to that just kind of shame and because we care about not being, uh, the thing we most fear, you know, not being some sort of monster, but that we can so quickly flip into that assumption and then that doesn't really put us in a very good spot to be able to have a productive conversation.

Yeah. Okay, so let's say. We've gotten to the point where, you know, maybe we're a little bit better at reflecting [00:41:00] rather than reacting. We've done some work around building resilience, , and can manage some of those negative emotional reactions. Um, one of the things you talk about in the book is coming at things with curiosity.

So having this like learner's mindset, like the growth mindset, trying to obtain more knowledge. , and so without looking to stoke conflict, but wishing to respectfully disagree, how do you recommend going about that?

And maybe we can talk about an example if you have one.

David Glasgow: For sure. So, a, as you say, you know, resilience and curiosity are really critical skills cuz I think sometimes when we think we disagree with someone, it might actually just be that we. Haven't adequately cultivated that resilience and curiosity. So we're, we think we disagree, but maybe we are blowing the statement out of proportion, or maybe we're overwhelmed by the negative emotions that we are feeling.

And once we actually right size the feedback and get in a growth mindset, we realize that there isn't really a disagreement there. Or [00:42:00] maybe we haven't learned enough about the subject. So if we're curious, if we're open to the fact that maybe we are wrong, we'll realize that we are wrong. And so there isn't really a disagreement there.

But you know, my co-author, Kenji and I strongly feel that there are still going to be situations in life where we're inevitably gonna disagree with each other about these issues. And so we need some tools for navigating strategies around communicating that disagreement respectfully. And one of the really, I.

Tools that we offer in the book is just to recognize that not all disagreements are the same. And so we introduced this notion called a controversy scale. So if you imagine just a straight line from right to left, not, not a political kind of right to left, but just, you know, a straight line. And then on the far left of the spectrum, just think about, you know, a disagreement over tastes.

So if you and I are disagreeing over which flavor of ice cream is the best, or what Netflix show we like the most, I mean, that's not [00:43:00] generally a painful disagreement to have if you're having a disagreement

over tastes.

Jill Stoddard: benign

David Glasgow: Yeah. But then if you sort of move along the spectrum, imagine that next to tastes is disagreeing over facts.

Now this is. what, when, how type facts. Not like just journalistic facts, not deep values type facts, right? That's a little harder than tastes, but it's not as hard as if we have to disagree over policies. And then imagine again, that we have to disagree over values that becomes even harder. And then imagine on the far right of the controversy scale is where you disagree about the very equal humanity of the people that you're talking about.

Now, we argue that, you know, obviously the conversation is gonna get more challenging. The further along that spectrum you get toward the right. And what often happens in these conversations is that the, the, the ally person who's from a, from a dominant majority group, is often at a very different point on the controversy scale to the person on the other side who's directly affected by something.

So let's [00:44:00] say you're a parent and your children's school has a set of programs around. Race or diversity, equity and inclusion in the curriculum. There's obviously been a huge, you know, controversy and argument in the public domain in recent months around the way that issues of race and and identity are taught in schools.

So let's say that you're a parent of a, a white child in that school and you disagree with the approach that the school has taken to its diversity, equity, and inclusion curriculum. Now, you might just think about that topic as purely an issue of policy. So you might think, well, I'm arguing about how history should

be taught in schools, or what level of the curriculum is appropriate for different ages in the classroom.

But let's say you're having that conversation with someone who's a parent of. A child of color, a black student at that classroom, for example, that parent might actually think that the disagreement is about the equal humanity of their child in the school because their child perhaps is [00:45:00] getting bullied because of the color of their skin in the classroom.

Or you know, they don't feel like they belong in that environment. And they feel like these diversity, equity, inclusion, or race education programs are critical to their child's sense of belonging at the school. So you are treating it at one point on the controversy scale as a policy question. They're treating it on the end of the, um, controversy scale as an equal humanity question.

And so it's really important we think, in those kinds of conversations. To just acknowledge the fact of what this conversation might mean to the other person and how it's different from your own perspective. So you might say something like, you know, to me, you know, I'm analyzing this question as an issue of policy and I think there are some important policy issues to talk about, but I just wanna take a moment to acknowledge that for you, this may actually have much deeper implications and be really important to you and your child's belonging at the school.

And I wanna make sure that as we're having this conversation, that I'm honoring and respecting that in the way that we have this conversation. I think, you know, that simple acknowledgement, it's not gonna [00:46:00] make the conversation go easily. I think any disagreement on this topic is gonna be hard no matter how you do it, but I think it's just, it's signals basic empathy and perspective taking to be able to see that.

And I think that makes it a little bit easier than it might otherwise have been if you had just barreled into the conversation, treating it totally as an issue of policy and not recognizing what it might mean to the other person.

Jill Stoddard: right. I think people get so rigid into this, um, , there's one way to look at this and there's a right way and there's a wrong way. And that if there could be, I mean, I think perspective taking is exactly the word there.

It's like to take that beat and to try to consider this other person's point of view. And even if you don't disagree with it, to at least be able. acknowledge it to show that you hear what it appears to be or to even check to see if you have that

right, right or wrong. And that, you know, you don't necessarily have to come to the same conclusion, but the conversation can be more, can be more productive when it has that perspective.

Taking, [00:47:00] understanding, empathy, kind of at the core of it. Yeah.

David Glasgow: And you can even tag on at the end of when you communicate your own disagreement. I think it's always a good practice to actually pose a question to the other person and just say, you know, am I missing anything? What's your perspective on this? It's showing that you may not have the full truth on your side.

You have your own opinion on these subjects, but you're really inviting the other person to share how they see the situation. So again, it goes back to that practice of curiosity. You can build curiosity into the way that you communicate your own disagreements as well.

Jill Stoddard: And do you think, is the advice the same whether. A person who's been marginalized and you wanna disagree with a person who's from a majority culture. You know, cuz the way we've been talking about it is vice versa. Are the principles, do you think the principles are the same?

David Glasgow: It's a great question because we, um, specifically wrote the book for the people who are in that ally position, rather than from the perspective of the person who's in the marginalized [00:48:00] position. Cuz we felt that, you know, so often the dynamics of these conversations, there is a burden that's placed on the member of the marginalized group to make sure the conversation's going well.

And there's been, you know, plenty of other books that have been written on that subject. And so we really wanted to attack it from the perspective. If you are in that higher power position, how do you navigate this conversation most effectively? However, you know, I do think that. As I think about the seven principles in the book around, you know, building resilience and cultivating curiosity and disagreeing respectfully and so forth, I hope that those ideas are gonna be beneficial to people no matter where they enter the conversation from.

Because, you know, we're all humans at the end of the day. And so we all can have a tendency to slip into unhelpful patterns of communication and, you know, emotions that overcome us and make it more difficult for us to engage, um, thoughtfully in dialogue with each other. And so I do, even though we've written the book more from those majority group members, I do [00:49:00]

hope that the techniques we have to offer in the book will be helpful more widely.

Jill Stoddard: Yeah, I mean I found myself, of course when you read, you think about the way this relates to your own personal experience and I realized so many of the examples that were coming to mind. You know, there was a time where parents at my daughter's school were complaining to the teacher because she was talking about her L G B T Q I plus identity.

And that was a time where I avoided and I stayed silent and I didn't speak up, you know, thinking about the conversational traps. And there was a conversation I had recently, , with a straight cis. White male who was I think, trying to align with me. We were talking about sexism and his way of trying to align was to say, well, at my age I'm becoming obsolete.

He's like 47. At my age, I'm becoming obsolete. So I, I get it, I get what it's like to experience sexism. And I will admit I responded very, very poorly to that. [00:50:00] And ultimately, it sort of escalated into probably what would be considered the, the attacking kind of mode. And so I was thinking about, gosh, if I could go back and have a do-over, you know, what do I need to do differently?

And it did really feel like these principles would still apply. So like ideally those other people would be doing the work to maybe not land in this particular conversation in the first place. But the reality is we're often going to continue finding ourselves in this. Position and I thought, gosh, yes, if I was able to reflect and, you know, had more resilience around my emotions that got triggered.

I will say in the sexist example, I had had a couple drinks and so that is probably also not a very good idea. Um, you know, so I, I do think that that everything that I was reading about, um, if, if I could go back and have a do-over, I think a lot of this would be really helpful to make that conversation more productive.

And, and maybe even, especially the [00:51:00] curiosity. I mean, I'm so aware that just my immediate response was to be, you know, angry and defensive and make assumptions about who someone is or their intention. Um, and never asked a single question, just like, you know, went after it.

David Glasgow: Well I'm glad you found it useful in that, in that context, in thinking about that because, you know, as you say, we would primarily have

been writing this book for him, and I think, you know, if he had read the book with , , you know, in a discerning way, I think he would've, hopefully spotted in our section where we talk about deflection, that that's what he was engaged in, in the deflection to yourself by saying, you know, oh, I know what it's like to experience sexism because I'm a man and we are feeling obsolete.

Um, you know, that's a classic form of deflecting to yourself. And so I hope he would've been able to spot that and, and had that cringe moment you were describing earlier where he would look back on that conversation and think, oh my goodness, I can't believe I just did that. But I'm really, you know, heartened to hear that even from your perspective on the other [00:52:00] side of the conversation, you felt like some of these tools might have been helpful.

Jill Stoddard: Yeah, I do. Um, so you have a whole chapter on apologies, and I love, there's a quote in there. It's from John Caterer who calls apologies, humanity's perfect response to imperfection, . I just love that. So great. And you know, I think we know that apologies can be so healing, but they are so hard for us to genuinely offer.

And I think that's, again, maybe it's because that like feeling shame when you feel like you've made a mistake or done something wrong. And you know, they trigger that kind of like vulnerability in that moment. And so when you talk about apologies, you say a true apology includes four Rs recognition, responsibility, remorse, and redress.

So I think this is really important like that, that we all need to do a better job of trying to get apologies, right, of course, when we're having identity conversations. But this applies to any time that we've made a mistake or done something that's inconsistent with our [00:53:00] values. So can you talk a little bit about what those four Rs.

David Glasgow: absolutely. So the first one is recognition, and this is really about just recognizing the harm that was caused. So oftentimes, you know, we get stuck at this point by using an IF apology. So we'll say, I'm sorry if I offended you, or, If you're upset, I'm sorry. Or if I did anything, I'm sorry. And the problem with all of those formulations is that you're making it seem like the harm is somehow uncertain.

You know, if you're genuinely unsure, if you hurt someone, then ask, you know, show curiosity. Make sure you've, you've found out what it is, and then when it comes to apologizing, you could just apologize for it. With proper recognition

of that harm. Responsibility is about taking personal responsibility for causing the harm.

And so here people often will, uh, fall into the trap of using the word, but saying a butt apology. So they'll say, I'm sorry, but I didn't mean it. Or, I'm [00:54:00] sorry, but I was having a bad day. Or, I'm sorry, but I'm not a racist, or something like that. So, a classic example here was the comedian, Roseanne Barr, who, you know, sent out a tweet a number of years ago, a really highly racist tweet at two in the morning.

And then when she was called out for it the next day, she, her defense was, you know, I'm sorry, but I was, uh, ambient tweeting, right? So she was sort of blaming the fact that she was on ambient for, um, issuing this racist tweet. And so that's an example of where you're not really taking personal responsibility for what you did. Remorse is really about just communicating genuine contrition for causing the harm. So it, there isn't really a form of word or a, or a word like if, or, but that shows that you are not communicating remorse, but it's really about displaying sincerity in the way that you're communicating so that it's clear you're not making excuses for their behavior.

Um, and so a good example of someone who didn't do a good job on the remorse aspect is the celebrity chef [00:55:00] Mario Batali. So he was accused of sexually harassing multiple women, and he wrote an apology in his newsletter and he sort of started out the apology in a way that sounded okay, like it sounded like he was on the right track to order a sincere apology.

But then at the bottom in the newsletter, he added, you know, ps uh, here's a recipe for pizza dough, cinnamon rolls if you're looking for a great holiday treat and, you know, had a link to the recipe and a picture of the rolls. And I think that's sort of a very obvious example where I think most people reading that would wonder, are you really sincerely remorseful in your apology if you are throwing in a recipe for pizza, do cinnamon rolls, uh, in that newsletter?

Right? And so I think this is an example where, you know, you can either make the mistake of underdoing the remorse like that, or overdoing the remorse and berating yourself or what a terrible person you are. And in that instance, it might seem like you're remorseful, but it, what it has the effect of doing is it makes the other person who's been hurt by you.

it turns them into the [00:56:00] comforter who has to then reassure you that everything's okay, rather than you communicating your apology to them. So it's a little

Jill Stoddard: those ally tears again. Yeah. Yeah.

David Glasgow: And then the final element is redress. And this is about really ensuring that you're backing the words of an apology with action.

So I think one of the reasons why people sometimes don't like apologies is cuz they think it's all talk, no action. Right? Anyone can say utter the words of an apology, but if they go on and keep doing the same thing over and over,

Jill Stoddard: Right? Like kids Infa infamously

David Glasgow: ex.

Jill Stoddard: They just parrot the words they know they're supposed to say, but the four Rs are typically not there.

David Glasgow: Exactly. And so, you know, redress is about just making sure that you change your behavior or you take whatever tangible steps in that situation might be necessary to repair the damage that you have done. And it may, may mean other conversations with the person. It may mean checking in with the other person just to, to ensure that your behavior has, has changed from their perspective since you offered the initial apology.

Um, and we think that really if you think about those four Rs [00:57:00] of recognition, responsibility, remorse, and redress, when you're giving an apology, um, you are well on your way, I think to, to giving a good one. It doesn't need to be a big traumatic speech that goes on on an on in an apology. You can do it in only a couple of sentences, but we think those four are the kind of guideposts to help you all along the way.

Jill Stoddard: Yeah. Have you ever heard the apology from Dan Harmon? So, d Dan Harmon was a writer, uh, of the show community among many other things, and he became kind of, uh, known, I think outside of those circles because he was, , accused of some sort of sexual harassment of some kind. I, I think of a, a coworker, a female coworker, um, and he publicly apologized.

And that apology has sort of been held up as a really good example of a, a true apology. And I'd have to go back and listen to it again. It's been a long time, but I'm pretty sure these four Rs would be there. I can even try to find it and put it in our show notes if people want to see, but it, it was really like nothing I had ever heard or seen, like the [00:58:00] level to which he really took responsibility.

And of course, I don't know about redress or if he's changed over time. , we haven't heard any other, you know, bad news about him since that time. Um, but it, and, and I was so aware of my emotional respo, oh, I'm getting choked up right now just thinking about it, like my emotional response to that. Wow, this was a long time ago.

And it's like really making me get tearful because it's so rare, you know, when you've been someone who's been wrong to like genuinely have, , , the person on the other side to be able to truly take responsibility and feel genuine remorse. I mean, these apologies are so powerful and so healing, and I think when we can do it and we can get it right, it, it just goes such an incredibly long way.

David Glasgow: Yeah. I mean, we opened the chapter on apologies with, um, you know, a book called *The Apology*, written by, , uh, v who formerly known as Eve Ensler, who, you [00:59:00] know, writes this, this book, um, offering this poignant long form apology from her father to her for abusing her as a child and what's, you know, really powerful and poignant, but also just so.

A painful about that apology is that, is that she had to write it herself. You know, she waited her whole life to get an apology for her father, and she never got one, and he died, and then she had to write an apology from him to her. And so I think this just really speaks to what you're saying about, it's just so rare for people in these positions of power to offer a deep, thoughtful, remorseful apology.

But the impact of doing that, of actually giving that apology is so profound that I think anyone who is maybe worried that it's gonna make them more vulnerable or expose them to whatever, to criticism for offering an apology, I think should pause and think about, well, maybe what if offering this apology is actually [01:00:00] going to heal the relationship that I have broken with this other person?

And what impact might that have, you know?

Jill Stoddard: What if not only the opposite happens, but it actually makes things better? And you know, I know I have so many clients who. Just desperately wish they could get an apology from a parent. And it makes me think about my role as a parent, you know, kind of going forward. I know I'm gonna make so many mistakes, you know, and not only how can I offer genuine apologies when that happens, it's also modeling genuine apologies.

You know, that was something that wasn't modeled to me really growing up. Um, and you know, and I think that that's, it's so incredibly important. So we're, we're getting toward, toward the end of our time. I have one last question for you that doesn't actually have anything to do with the book.

, But I'm curious. It was kind of along the same lines of thinking about the word privilege and some of these things that become, have become kind of triggering in, in like modern times. And there's been a lot of news coverage of this, , new [01:01:00] trend to change the words in books like the, you know, the Dr.

Seuss books in an effort to make them, um, more, what's the word I'm looking for? Culturally sensitive maybe. Um, and I'm just, I'm curious if you think like, is this advancing the conversation or setting us back or something else altogether? Do you have thoughts about that?

David Glasgow: Yeah. I mean, we, so, you know, we don't write about this in the book, but I do have, you know, my own kind of personal view about this subject, which is, I don't really like this, this trend of, of going back and amending historical, know, artistic works and books and so forth, because I just think it's much more healthy for us to try to process and learn from, you know, different standards, different cultures, different time periods, and the way that people express themselves, even if.

it's offensive. Or even if there's things that people wouldn't do and put that in a context. So if you're teaching that in a classroom, you can actually set the [01:02:00] table with the students and say, look, there are a lot of words in this, this book cuz it was written, you know, 50 years ago or a hundred years ago.

Whatever it is that we just wouldn't use today. And you know, what's your analysis of that? Why do you think the author used that terminology? What kind of attitudes in the culture of that time might have led to people using that kind of language to depict certain groups? I think that kind of open conversation that, um, around the content of this material is a healthier way to approach some of these topics than just going in there and taking a pen to it and sort of changing the language.

I also think there's room for. Potentially saying, like, you see sometimes on, I think Disney does this on some, you know, of the older kids, uh, movies, right? You see a pop up on the screen, kind of like you have a warning of sort of, this is rated R or this is rated whatever. You know, they'll have a little thing.

I have two young kids, we watch sort of Disney movies. Sometimes it'll pop up on the screen and say, you know, this contains [01:03:00] stereotypical depictions of, you know, such and such a group. You know, those depictions were wrong then and they're wrong now, and we hope this will stimulate conversation about, you know, how to be more inclusive or, you know, something along those lines.

I think that kind of, that kind of, um, notice is a, a more helpful way of contextualizing it for people and hopefully creating the kinds of conversations that we want to create around the book of like, how can we be more inclusive going forward?

Jill Stoddard: I love that. I've never seen those popups, but that's really interesting. Yeah. So it's like us using it as an opportunity, um, as a teaching tool really. , and the other thing it made me think of is I wonder if these changes are actually fueling the fear of cancel culture. Like, oh geez, even Dr. Seuss just got essentially canceled and he's dead.

Like he can't even respond to it. That, that, it might even stoke those fears of like, anything I say or do now might come back to haunt me, you [01:04:00] know,

David Glasgow: Yeah. Yeah. I think we're living at a time now where there's a lot of opportunity that people, opponents of diversity and inclusion, people who actually wanna shut down these conversations. People who oppose social justice. , I think it gives some fuel to their fire to be able to say, look at the, you know, sensors, people who are telling you what to think and telling you what to say.

And so my approach to this question is much more, I don't wanna give them that fuel, you know, I want to encourage inclusive behavior, but I want to do it in a way that still creates room for, you know, free speech and other principles as

Jill Stoddard: right, right. Well, thanks for entertaining that question. I was really curious about, about your thoughts. This has been such a great conversation. I really appreciate you joining me. Tell our listeners if they wanna learn more about you. Again, the book is, say the Right Thing, how to Talk about Identity, diversity, and Justice, and you co-wrote it with your colleague, Kenji Yoshino.

Where can people find out more about you, David, if they want to do.

David Glasgow: So Kenji and I both work at the [01:05:00] Meltzer Center for Diversity, inclusion and Belonging. So if you just Google Meltzer Center, I'm sure you'll be able to find us. It's at NYU School of Law. And then you can also find me on, , LinkedIn or Twitter if you wanna follow along. Me personally,

Jill Stoddard: and are you at David Glasgow

David Glasgow: uh, at DV Glasgow.

Jill Stoddard: At DB Glasgow. Okay. We will look for you there, and I will put all of that in the show notes. So thank you so much. This has been great.

David Glasgow: Well, thank you so much, Jill.

Yael Schonbrun: Hey, psychologists, off the clock listeners, I'm gonna guess that if you got to the end of this episode that you also love to geek out about books in psychology.

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