



## S1:E1 - Cath Bishop | The Long Win

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**Beth Stallwood:** Welcome to the Work Joy Jam podcast. In this episode, I had a really insightful conversation with author, ex-Olympian, ex-diplomat, now coach and amazing thinker, Cath Bishop. We talked about her book *The Long Win*, her search for a different way to succeed for us to talk about what winning looks like to talk about performance to rehumanize the workplace. A really fascinating conversation built around the 3 Cs around Clarity, what it is you're trying to do, who you are, what you're trying to make happen. The idea that we all need to get in the mindset and a zone of constantly learning and that collaboration is such an important part of what the future really looks like.

I really enjoyed this conversation. We probably could have spoken to for another couple of hours after our session here. I hope you enjoy it too.

Hello, welcome Cath Bishop to the Work Joy Jam podcast. I'm not going to introduce Cath. She's going to introduce herself so Cath, welcome along. We'd love you to tell us all a little bit about yourself, your background, your story so far, and maybe a little bit about what we're going to talk about.

**Cath Bishop:** [00:01:55] Brilliant. It's great to be here, Beth. Thanks for inviting me on, um, yeah how do I summarize the backstory? Um, I guess in terms of CV terms, I was an Olympic rower for 10 years. I was a diplomat for 12 years working for the foreign office, including in some fairly hairy parts of the world where conflict was rife. And now I work as a business coach consultant speaker, and I've recently written a book.

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:02:22] Exciting and your book *The Long Win* I have delved deep inside it, and I'm loving it and I'd love to draw out today some of the key themes from that and how we can use some of your thinking to help us all get a bit more work joy, a bit more of that happiness, feeling the joy at work, the little things that we can do to make a real difference in our lives.

So Cath, tell us a little bit about your thinking around *The Long Win* and around the idea that we can all take a bit more control in cultivating and developing our own levels of joy at work.

**Cath Bishop:** [00:02:58] Yeah. So *The Long Win* has evolved through all of those different careers. I should mention I'm also a parent and that's also kind of given me a lens on, what brings joy to, to life inside work, outside work.

I think it's been a kind of many year process of looking at how our success definitions define the joy you would get along the way or take the joy away. Obviously, living and competing as an Olympic athlete, you know, we're in a world that was all about winning, you know, every day you were sort of working in order to win and, and the mantra was sort of really strong about, are you tough enough to win? Are you good enough to win? Do you want it enough? Particularly my early rowing career, that was, that was just the dominant narrative. But actually over time, sports psychology has started to shift, um, and take away the emphasis on winning, but in order to give us the best chance of winning. So it's that contrast between, if we think about the performance process, then that helps us to get a better result, but we stop obsessing about the result, but this, you know, obsession about result this, not just in sport, I see it in business, I see it as a parent with children going to schools who are desperate to get good grades and desperate to get good positions in the school league tables. I see it all around us. It's in politics, it's in the language of some of our political leaders with Trump, you know, ultimately continually talking about who's the winner, who's the loser.

So it's a bit of an obsession in our culture and I just think in all of these different fields, it holds us back. It takes joy out of what we're doing, and it actually holds us back from reaching our potential.

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:04:40] Yeah, and I totally see it as well in it when business that I work in that obsession, especially ones that are led by maybe shareholders who are looking for a quick win or a quick buck or two being made who want results on a monthly, quarterly basis versus the long term thinking and that rushing, and maybe it's just me who thinks this, but the idea that whenever you want something done quickly, the rushing doesn't lead to the best outcome. It leads to a lot of kind of fraughtness in teams. It doesn't lead to great collaboration from what I can see. And are you seeing that kind of thing when you're working in business as well?

**Cath Bishop:** [00:05:20] Absolutely. So the consequences of this desperation to win to hit targets, and it's when winning is defined very narrowly that we get this real problem that it's defined by some short term metric, maybe quarterly results, maybe, you know, targets within the team, sales targets, annual targets, which are really quite sort of momentary, um, to, to achieve they don't last and actually you know, they, they also don't have much deeper meaning unless we take time to understand why are these targets important? When we don't have that, they feel very superficial. They're also often very much vulnerable to external forces. And as we've seen this year in 2020, lots of you know, the, the sort of targets people have aimed for have been wiped away and then they're left with a sense of, oh my goodness, why are we here? What are we doing? So The Long Win is actually prioritizing the why, the purpose, getting much clearer about what matters at work. And that then brings in a whole lot of other factors to play it. Our experience matters the purpose, the impact, the intentions that we have, you know, why we exist as a team that matters the values that we work, by the way we connect with one another, that matters.

So it's broadening the criteria of success and lengthening them in time as well in order to drive different ways of thinking and different ways of behaving. So we're not just trying to be better than the person next to us. We're not competing with, uh, against our colleagues. We're collaborating with them.

That's the sort of real difference that creates a totally different dynamic within a workplace and a different experience of being in that workplace or being part of a team we're actually yours, much more supporting each other, rather than trying to impede each other.

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:07:07] Yeah, and you've not got that internal competition going on where you're trying to fight to be the best or to be the best in a very narrow definition.

I'm really interested in that idea, that those short term metrics, the idea that you can just measure something with a singular number that you've never really considered or thought about, the broader picture. And one thing I'm really hearing from what you're talking about there is actually bringing some human aspects back into the conversation to think about actually, rather than just searching and striving for this number that doesn't really mean anything how do we really set ourselves up for success in the long-term? How do we really work with each other and collaborate closely, but together, and as well as bringing joy surely that can bring better results in the long-term as well, versus striving, striving, striving for short term, maybe even having people to burn out, having organizations that don't have the great culture to be able to do good work.

And I'm really interested as well in this idea because so many organizations have them, but are they really living them around the values? And are we really living the values that we want to be living, or are they the things that kind of sit on the wall and look nice versus how do we really work? And what's really happening within the team.

**Cath Bishop:** [00:08:21] Yeah, I totally agree that that's really the, at the heart of long-win thinking it's re humanizing the workplace, putting those things first. It's not just, oh, you know, a fluffy sort of thing. This is, this is actually about a better way of creating sustained high performance, wellbeing is a really important part of that. And actually providing meaning to work to the work we do is absolutely essential in order to tap into those deeper sources of motivation. Because the challenge is when we've got these short-term targets to hit, we're just really playing to that part of our brains that gets, you know, the quick hit from, oh, you know, I've done this, I've done this, I've come top in this, in that sort of short-term way. It lasts for a second and then I've got to do the next thing I've got to do the next we've got to hit the next target and that is not a fulfilling way of, of living. And it actually also doesn't tap into that deeper resource where we're motivated by the meaning of something.

So the other part of our brains that kind of relates to purpose to why that then enables us to be much more creative, much more resilient, much more innovative. So again, it's understanding motivation in a different way. And, I'm not quite sure why, but a lot of our organizations have come to be very much reliant on extrinsic motivation, so the external rewards, the bonus, the, you know, the reward for in your target, the incentives, and these are shallow. They don't actually tap into what's really important to all of us. Whereas if we understood the intrinsic drivers, so the things that give us meaning in what we do, um, that sense of meaningful progress in work that matters that's far more powerful, far more sustainable.

So it's about really stopping and thinking about how do we motivate each other to, to get so much more out of work.

**Beth Stallwood:** And it's interesting, isn't it? That businesses rely on these things that have been around for a long time, but have very little proven success in, um, measures around like bonuses, incentives, um, long-term packages, that kind of thing, which really in the research don't say work, but we haven't necessarily a better way of tapping in to those intrinsic motivations yet. And I wonder how much of that is in a, a cycle, a loop around we need to get short-term results, so we'll think about this as the way of getting it, even if it, um, sometimes those things develop bad behavior. So if you're in competition for a bonus pot, you know, what's the who wins and who loses in that sense, is it, it drives the same kind of thinking versus driving a longer term more tapping into real motivation in people.

**Cath Bishop:** You just put your finger on the nail that, that kind of, um, short term pressures that drive that sort of short-termism if you like, but it stops us making decisions that are, are much more sensible for the, for the longer term.

And, and it really, you know, drives different thinking that that actually limits us. It puts a limit on what we're able to do. And we, I think one of the sort of reasons that we get sucked into that is because it's easy to measure and that's a real trap because it's easy to measure in itself that becomes a justification for it.

[00:11:33] But that doesn't, you know, that then means that things that aren't easy to measure. We, we devalue, we deprioritize and yet that's where work joy is found and performance is to be found.

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:11:45] Yeah. And I'm really interested to hear and, maybe, dig into this a bit more for me is that actually in high-performance when you can get there in the right way with the right values, with the right thinking with the right collaboration and you know, that long term aspect is that joy sits there.

It doesn't necessarily sit in the short term wins. It doesn't necessarily sit in, you know, being flustered and trying to achieve things by an arbitrary deadline, all that kind of stuff. So talk, talk to me a little bit more about in your experience, in different worlds around how, when you focus on the long win you can actually get more joy in your working day, whether you're working as a professional sports person in business as a consultant, what have you seen happen in those areas?

**Cath Bishop:** [00:12:30] So it is about thinking, not just, it's thinking beyond the target. How do you want people to look back on the experience, of what's happened? So I've absolutely in the workplace and in the sports world, seeing the sort of short term, shallow joy, it's not what I would call joy. That sort of short-term shallow high, if you like, because it's part of that kind of addictive part of our brains that we're playing to.

That that means oh we hit target. Oh, we did this. Oh, you know, that's great for the team, but then the cost of that. You start to realize, well, actually, you know, we didn't, we didn't behave well towards each other. We chucked values out of the window and that's, we've now got to deal with the consequences of that.

That means then, you know, the more you look back on that time, you realize, gosh, that's really quite a shallow, positive that, that brings us that this is now that a longer-term term that we've got to deal with. So I think it is, you know, because we didn't, um, put a priority on the way we

supported each other, the way we connected with each other, we didn't really link to our longer term purpose so that we hit that target. We're less well set up to hit the next target or, you know, we can't call on people to give the same reserves of energy that we drained right down to the bottom of the barrel. We can't keep asking people to do that. But that's the, that's what we played to before.

[00:13:47] So I think, you know, as soon as we stop to think about what's happening, you know, let's look back on that, and how do we now move forward from, from what that's taught us to do? You know, we're not in a good place. I think in the sporting world, we see a similar thing where, you know, an athlete may have won the race, they may have won a medal, but actually they had a terrible experience along the way. There may be, were forced to kind of train on an injury. Now they've got to deal with that and they sort of leave with leave sport with, you know, not, not a good story, maybe some mental health issues that are kind of ongoing longer term.

So it's that, you know, we want something in the short term, but actually let's think about the longer term price that we paid. So be aware of what you're trading off in order to hit these short term metrics. If you like, you know, in order to create joy, you know, what other fallout is there? And we need to be better at reviewing that admitting to it, say, do you know what? Yeah. You know, we cut some corners here. That's not helped us. So next time, what are we going to do to do it differently? I find that whole process of reviewing is cut out because we've already hit the target. So we'll carry on. We'll do the same again. And you can never do the same again. And those kinds of things that you cut corners on, you know, bite in and hurt you harder and harder each time.

So, you know, again, not letting the result. You know, stop you from analyzing what's working. What's not working. That's the basic approach. Let's get good at learning. Let's get good at improving, doing things differently, trying things in a different way and always thinking, okay, let's, let's try it. You know, this didn't work so well.

Let's try doing some few different way rather than just simply the results. If we hit the results, everything's fine. We carry on. And if we don't hit the results, oh, that's awful. And we sack people or we've got to get rid of people or, you know, don't really understand what we might have done that led to that result.

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:15:33] So interesting, isn't it? Because it's so easy to see the cycle. When you look at it from afar, that just because somebody won a medal or won a race, doesn't mean that the experience leading up to it was great or that they can do it again. Um, and the same in business, isn't it just because we might have achieved our financial targets doesn't mean we haven't burnt everyone out while we're doing it doesn't mean that people aren't looking for jobs elsewhere because, um, it's just not a great place to work. It doesn't mean people are happy or finding joy or motivation in their work that they're scrambling to strive for something that perhaps really isn't sustainable.

But the use of those narrow metrics would say success, tick let's move on and carry on and do everything the same. Taking into that world, a real unpicking and a real reflection of how did we get here? And did we get here in the right way? What else could we do? How could we do things differently?

But again, the, the answer I often get, if I'm talking to people about it takes more reflection is we just don't have time. We don't have time. We don't have time because we're still striving for the same old speed. The same results, the same things without really resetting everything. And it sounds to me like in business and in sport, there's a real need to kind of reset actually.

[00:16:49] How do we do these things? How do we build these things from the ground up in terms of what are we working towards? What are all our values? How are we working together and not just try and put some sticky plasters over things? And really kind of understand what's going on.

**Cath Bishop:** [00:17:04] You know, the two hold factors where if you, like, if you had people who understand the language of metrics and want that, the two kind of areas that we really hurt by operating, like this is, you know, retention of talent and the attraction of talent.

[00:17:16] And I think that more than ever is critical for businesses who need, you know, to, to, to have the right people who can bring the sort of ideas and adaptability for this very uncertain, unpredictable world that we're in. Um, and you know, again, nobody can afford to have more people than, than is absolutely necessary.

[00:17:36] So therefore you need to get everything out for the people that you have. So I do think that there's a kind of increasing need to rethink, and those two factors are really important to a business. And if you know, you should never look at the outcome. You know, short term results without considering what impact have they had on our metrics of retaining talent and attracting talent.

[00:17:59] So I think you know, actually understanding if you're going to play the metrics game, then you need to include sort of all the relevant metrics. But actually, you know, I would say, you know, and as you're suggesting that let's step away from sort of metric madness, it's a part of the picture. It should never be the full picture.

[00:18:17] You actually need to think in a much more human way about how we can understand the people we have and get the best out of them, create those inclusive environments, where again, we're enabling people to bring all of who they are rather than feel they've got to kind of leave a lot of, a lot of their talents to one side because only a narrow bit is appreciated.

Building up that sense of values, how we want to work in all of those things that takes a little bit longer. Actually, you know, by going the short term route, we create issues in the future. That take just as much time. So, you know, I don't really buy the time argument either.

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:18:54] Yeah. It's just time invested upfront versus time unpacking problems at the end. Isn't it?

**Cath Bishop:** [00:19:01] It's just a different way, much more joyous to be investing time in these things up front. They're not picking the problems, you know, that's such a headache and that some of your own making, and then that's really difficult at that point to, to kind of undo things that have been done. It's so much better to set things up and to be reviewing as you go along, that's really essential. I think we can often just think, right, we've done the setting up phase. Now we're into kind of just charging full speed ahead that we need to be learning and adapting as we go again, because we live in such an unpredictable world.

[00:19:32] And, and in order to, you know, we have a human workplace, we need to be learning about what's working and not, not working. We have new people coming into teams. We need to review and sort of set again. We seem to be very rigid often about, um, you know, how things are done and that pursuit of the short aims can, can create that rigidity.

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:19:50] Yeah, it's so interesting. Isn't it? This idea that we need to be continuing to review and we need to be more agile in how we adapt and do things differently and that the world is ever changing and never more so than the situation we're in 2020 COVID 19 has happened. Things, things that you usually thought for sure we're going to be true forever are not, and everything's changing. And I do wonder when we think about metrics and organizations is our way of thinking about metrics. I don't think has caught up with the way the world is. The idea that those metrics came from a long time ago, you know, the industrial revolution, how many things can you produce in one day versus actually what most people do jobs now they're using their brains and their understanding and their skills and their unique strengths and backgrounds and experience and history.

[00:20:37] And the list goes on to be able to inform things like innovation and to be able to input into how we make experiences for customers better. How do we make sure we connect and collaborate in the right way with different organizations, but our metrics haven't really caught up with the workplace as far as I can see in many places.

**Cath Bishop:** [00:20:56] Yes and I think some mentalities of telling that sort of driving more and more efficiency, more and more efficiency. And you know, what we saw on a kind of bigger macro scale with our health services, we've driven so much efficiency, efficiency, efficiency, the targets were always around efficiency that we had lost preparedness and that ability to cope with big shocks and emergencies. And then of course having gained all those sort of, you know, minute deficiencies year on year on year in we you know, we had to respond in a much bigger way. So then invest in the fact that we hadn't prepared ourselves. For, you know, a crisis like this health pandemic.

[00:21:33] So as a perfect example of how we can get sort of caught into, you know, this very narrow world that we think we're doing really well in, and then suddenly something happens in a completely different area that, that, you know, that that's just small fry actually is irrelevant. So it is important to see the bigger picture for sure.

[00:21:49] It is important to also understand that, you know, in, in a small part of our, of our working worlds, I'm sure there's, there's a need for efficiency, but those sort of manufacturing type situations often are the worlds that will soon AI will be able to do. And we should be then, you know, really focusing on the areas where we can play much more to what we bring as humans.

[00:22:09] You know, that the teamwork, the collaboration thinking differently, um, you know, the connection, if you like to customers, to stakeholders, um, the leadership piece, you know, all of those aspects, we should be investing in more than ever.

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:22:24] Definitely. And I totally agree with this thinking and that we need organizations to really reconsider how they measure, how they set things up the time that they give and where they give the time at the beginning, rather than at the end, perhaps, and in reviewing and changing.



[00:22:40] And I hear a lot of organizations saying that we're really agile in the way we work, but perhaps not being agile in the way we measure or the way we review or the way we reflect. So we want people to be agile in their work every day, which means we want to be able to give them the five different things to do in a day.

[00:22:54] But are we really actually being agile in the way that we run our organization? Are we being agile in the way that we review and reflect and make things happen? So definitely some work for organizations to think about, to do. If we always can take it from the macro level of organizations to taking it to the individual level for us as people and, uh, people on that listening to this podcast will be thinking, okay, so I'm not in charge of an organization. I work within this structure. It's not always perfect. We are in a zone where I have things that I have to get measured and get done. I'd be really interested us now to maybe dig into a little bit as an individual when we're thinking about how do we personally redefine our success and maybe what are some of the things that we can do as individuals to bring that joy, even when we might be working in a place that doesn't have it all perfect yet.

**Cath Bishop:** [00:23:44] Yeah, sure. And that's where I really come back to my three Cs of the long way, which are all about developing our thinking and our behaviors and the way we connect with one another, because our mindsets, our behaviors, our relationships, those are things that we make choices about. Those are things that we have control over.

[00:24:03] Um, and it's important to give ourselves time then to, to maximize those to allow those to be part of that our working experience. And so by clarity, I mean, clarifying what matters to us in, within our team, how do we want to work? You know, why is it important for us to achieve those targets? What's the bigger purpose? What's the meaning? Understanding each of the drivers that we all bring to the team. So rather than just thinking, like, that's your job title, that's who you are. Um, you know, I know who are they behind that? What is it that gets them out of bed in the morning? What are the things they care about? What other experience have they got in the past that we could draw on and that's really interesting that we could connect around. So clarifying, you know, even within a much sort of smaller area of what, you know, what matters, what's really important about the work you do and the way you want to go about it. The second C is constant learning. Really make sure we're learning all the time.

[00:24:56] Every day, actually success is about what we've learned, what we've tried to do differently, how we might have experimented, how we've got feedback around the work we do, how we've reflected and reviewed and looked for those marginal gains of ways we can do things tomorrow, 1% better than we did them today.

[00:25:14] So that constant learning, it gives us a huge momentum, creates lots of resilience to deal with the highs and the lows, if you like, because, you know, regardless of the results, we're always learning and growing and in that changing world around us, we're changing, we're developing we're growing too. So that's a huge part for me of you know, a really fulfilling experience at work, but you know, I'm gaining stuff all the time. It's stretching me in different ways. And the last C of connection is, you know, prioritizing the human connections in everything we do. So we invest in relationships. And again, we see that as key to our success, none of us can achieve success on our own.



[00:25:53] None of us can achieve those objectives on our own. So if we need others, let's, let's put that kind of as our priority. I think often when we're assessing how's the week going or has today gone, you know, we look at the task list, the, to do less, we look at the electronic calendar and have we done all the meetings and have we done all the action points, but actually I'd love us to think much more about, you know, who did I connect with today?

[00:26:16] How have I helped them do their work? How did I get them to help me do my work? What did I learn about them? That was different? You know, what other skills have they got knowledge that I can tap into that will help me to grow so that we prioritize that investment in relationships that is absolutely critical.

[00:26:33] Pays back enormously, both in terms of how much we enjoy work. And in terms of the quality of the work we do. But that's one of our metrics of success if you like. How are we investing in the relationships that matter and really exploring and who else we could connect?

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:26:49] Yeah, I love those three things. And, um, overall how simple they are, like clarity, you know, who are you? What do you want to do? What matters to you both as an individual and maybe within your team, just finding out more about those people and what what's going on with them and what they really like and love and care about and value in their work. Constant learning. I always talk about it every day's a school day, um, trying to find the, the learning that you have, whether it was something you did brilliantly and how do you repeat it or something that you think, oh, I need to know a bit more about that or do something differently, or actually, maybe I didn't think enough about the longterm in that particular conversation.

[00:27:23] What can I do about that? And the connections piece is so important. And while you were talking there, Cath, I was just really thinking about how. For some people during the situation we've been in, in the last 6, 7, 8 months. Um, I forget how long it is now, where we're not necessarily set up for remote connections and how do we keep connections developing?

[00:27:47] How do we develop relationships remotely? And for many people that's a whole new skill and a whole new ball game versus, oh, well I had a great connections cause we just saw each other at the coffee machine in the office once a week and we had a great chat, those things are sometimes missing now. And are you seeing the difference in remote connections and making it harder for people at the moment?

**Cath Bishop:** [00:28:09] So I think it can be, and I think it can feel different, but I actually don't think we set ourselves well set ourselves up well for this period, because I don't think we maximize connections often before that either, you know, open plan offices that I often saw kind of in my work, people were literally just staring at their computers and, um, you know, sending an email to someone across the office rather than going to talk to them.

[00:28:33] So I don't think it's a purely new thing. I think we've become aware of it if you like, because it's more obvious because we're physically not in the same room as somebody else, but often we didn't maximize then ever either. So I think there's, you know, yes, we, we, haven't always learned to prioritize and to think about why should I connect? How do I connect? But I think if you just think about the reasons for connecting, if you like, um, you know, why do I want to connect with

this person? You know, what, what can I learn from them then? You know, that starts to help us to connect. It's not about just a transaction.

[00:29:09] I need this from you. You give me this, I'll give you this. When I talk about connection, what that deeper level of finding out, you know, who are you and you know, what does this job mean to you and how do we connect and overlap? What have we got in common? What are the things where we could collaborate, like collaboration hasn't happened before and create value in a different way and learn from each other.

[00:29:28] And, and those conversations can happen still, if we want them to, if we see the value in it, And, you know, actually I see a sort of shift from yes we are all zoomed out, more conversations that are quality conversations, where people, you know, or going for a walk in there in a different kind of locations and, you know, going back to the kind of good old phone calls as well.

[00:29:51] Just making sure that in the written communications, there's not, you know, again, there's not just the sort of bare bones. But we're using messenger functions or chat functions to, to have those small informal moments. So, you know, yes, we're noticing it now and we really need to invest in it. I think we actually needed to invest more in it previously as well.

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:30:15] Yeah. And maybe now it's bringing to light that we don't have these things set up in the right way and we're not actually utilizing each other. And I love the idea of the reciprocity of relationships is that you look at what they might be able to give to you. You give back to them and you, you get a really great relationship where you're helping each other, and that helps the bigger picture.

[00:30:38] And if everyone did that, the bigger picture and the long term factors will ultimately get better because you've got more performance and more collaboration within the team. So question for you on this one, Cath is, obviously to me, it sounds so sensible, it sounds like exactly the right thing that organizations that individuals should be thinking about.

But why is it so hard to actually do it? What stops us thinking long-term what stops us reflecting, reviewing what stops us collaborating, um, in our everyday world.

**Cath Bishop:** [00:31:10] Yeah. That's a great question. And I, I think about it a lot because it isn't common sense often, we've seen to create organizations and systems, um, with very arbitrary and, um, sort of criteria like create incentives and pressures.

[00:31:28] That don't make sense. Um, but we're, you know, we have an experience of, um, compliance and feeling that we, you know, we, we have to do these things in this way and we can't challenge them. And I actually think this starts, you know, much earlier in our lives, our educational system often doesn't set us up. Um, being innovative and creative at work and challenging the status quo and moving things on connecting and collaborating.

[00:31:52] We're often taught at school that we're in competition, you know, against those around us that we need to be doing better and look better than our [00:32:00] peers. That actually going to be collaboration is cheating in a school format, often we're individually assessed. Um, and you know, again, it's that sort of, who's the best we're ranked in a very linear way.

[00:32:13] So I do think we, you know, that there's a lot in an early stage of our lives, that, that doesn't really, um, help us to, to, to think in a way that enables us to tap into that creativity, that innovation, that collaboration, that all of the workplaces now are crying out for. You know, again, it's our basic systems of how we build trust with people.

[00:32:34] Do we trust people? I mean, we see this playing out with governments as well. Do we sort of order people what to do in order to control the virus or do we allow much more kind of local autonomy and decision-making um, and we know that if we are working in a world where we're trying to control what everybody does, then, you know, we're, we're in a world where we're expecting compliance.

[00:32:55] And when we do that, we get, diminishing compliance. And we get, you know, lack of motivation and lack of joy in what we do. But our organizations are often set up with control at the heart, we've got to control everything, we've got to control the quality we've got to control the numbers, the metrics, the profit. Um, and I think that, you know, we've got to let go of that sort of control foundation has not easy because people have been conditioned to do that.

[00:33:22] And that's what we're seeing. It's quite hard to give that up on the other hand, the companies that are inventive and able to survive massive shops and adapt to the marketplace as changes so frequently, all the ones that are engaging much more through giving autonomy much flatter structures, much less hierarchical, and that then develops, um, rather than compliance engagement.

[00:33:48] And that unlocks the joy, the creativity we've talked about, these ideas, the decision-making that's based on purpose rather than, um, um, you know, short term gain. So, you know, I do think we've got a kind of fight of systems. Are we all about control or are we all about autonomy? Do we trust people to come to work or do we need to monitor their computer screens to see how many keyboard strikes they do in a minute, or whether they leave their computers, getting, you know, that is going to bring completely different experience and output and performance.

[00:34:23] So control versus autonomy is a really interesting one within our organization.

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:34:28] Yeah. And it's one of those things, isn't it is that we all know if we've worked for places where control, um, is part of how people do things versus, um, engagement and getting you involved and getting you interested in what's going on and telling you like what we're trying to achieve versus.

[00:34:46] Telling you what you have to do in a day? I always think that humans don't really like to be told what to do. I think there's an inner rebel in all of us that wants to slightly fight against that control and that fight, I don't think brings out the best in anybody versus the engagement. The autonomy of this is kind of within your realm. This is the framework within which we want you to work now, go and do your best thinking and your best work within it and do it in your own way. And even little things like flexible working and you see there was a big move during COVID everyone's going, oh, everyone's going to be completely flexible.

[00:35:20] No, one's going to have to go into the office anymore versus now people are going, actually we're missing some of that human to human collaboration. We need to make that happen.

Um, and then also people are doing that. How many, you know, we're monitoring your keyboard when you're at work to make sure that you don't take a long loo break and it's that? I honestly believe that the places that have more engagement will succeed in the long run better than the places that don't. So definitely some things that we can work on. And, um, I don't know about you, but my inner rebel comes out massively. Whenever anyone tries to control what I do.

**Cath Bishop:** [00:35:52] Yeah, absolutely it immediately sort of reminds me of the daily parenting challenges as well, that control versus autonomy. And of course, you know, when, when the, when your baby is really, really small, you know, you do control everything. Um, but the danger is, if you don't let go soon enough, then you know, you're in, you're in big trouble.

[00:36:09] And, um, and, and we all, we all know, remember that experience from our own childhood as well of, you know, actually we need that autonomy to develop into who we are and if we don't have that it causes huge short-term and long-term issues in finding who we are and our identity and exploring and making mistakes and growing.

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:36:30] Yeah, and I think there's a big thing isn't there about this. And we don't have time on this particular episode to go into this in detail, but maybe we'll do another one day is this idea that failure is a bad thing versus it's just part of the learning process. Um, and I find that really interesting how risk averse and how failure adverse organizations are, but who all want innovation and failure for me is a massive part of how you get to innovation.

**Cath Bishop:** [00:36:56] Yeah. I mean the whole labels of failure, I think it's an unhelpful label. It's really learning. It's really experimenting. That's how human progress has moved forward and evolution over, over centuries. So I think there's the language, you know, coming back to The Long Win, this whole language of winning and losing and succeeding and failing, you know, when it's that kind of binary is just totally unhelpful to learning and exploring what's possible.

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:37:23] Definitely. And just, um, before I go, I've got some kind of quick fire questions for you. Cath, what I'd love to hear from you is that a little bit about, obviously this is where your thinking is that this is what you explore is what you research, what you write about is what you talk about in your talks, it's what you live, is how have you gone about in your world living like this? Because I imagine it's not something that's easy to do and it must be an everyday questioning and thinking, and I'd just be really interested to know how you focus on the long win in your world

**Cath Bishop:** [00:37:55] that's a great question it is very much a work in progress. It is very much an ongoing. Yeah, way of, way of thinking, as you say, and I think that's an important point that this isn't like a formula tick I'm done. Now I'll move on to the next thing. Um, this is about, you know, an integrated way of how I see the world of how I challenge, what work I take on and how I assess, what do I want to do next?

[00:38:21] How are you sort of connect and, and think about the different people I work with in my sort of freelance associate kind of existence, if you like. So, I mean, it helps me to make decisions though that then feel informed. Now, sometimes there may be wrong decisions, but at least I then understand the process by which I got to that decision.

[00:38:41] So the next time I think, okay, well maybe I need to value this a bit more. So, you know, it comes into yes. Everything I do in terms of what work I take on who I reach out to, who I work with, all of those sorts of things, the areas that I move into. I mean, every year that I've been working in, in sort of, yeah business, each year I've sort of gone into slightly different areas or just expanded if you like, you know, to think, well, actually he doesn't overlap.

[00:39:05] There's a part leadership here. I want to dive a bit more deeply into, you know, the inclusive aspects or they're diving a bit more deeply into the sort of behavioral psychology aspects. So what it enables me to keep learning, keep growing. Um, and, and bringing more value to, to, to what I do as well and, and enjoying it more.

[00:39:25] So I think the learning pieces is just a massive part of who I am now and how I go through things. And it helps me to deal with, you know, regardless of whether things have sort of the outcomes of what I wanted or not actually defined the real positives that take me through to. Okay. So, so what do I do with that next?

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:39:44] Yeah. So you're you, it sounds like from that you really focus on your constant learning, one of your three CS and really using that as a way of helping you get more clarity and helping you to collaborate more and using that learning piece. So really great for you to share that. Thank you.

[00:39:59] I'm going to move on [00:40:00] now and I'm going to ask you some quick fire questions. So these are the questions that we ask everybody who comes on the Workjoy podcast and the first one. Is it a really obvious one for work joy. And I'd love to know what is guaranteed to always bring you some work joy.

**Cath Bishop:** [00:40:15] Uh, it's a theme we've talked about readies the connection.

[00:40:17] Yeah. It's, you know, connecting with others and actually finding something out about somebody else you didn't know that just, you know, is so interesting or you have a personal connection with, or just sort of enriches your connection with them, that, that relationship. So, yeah. It's going to be connections,

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:40:34] connections with other human beings.

[00:40:36] Great. Um, what book are you currently reading?

**Cath Bishop:** [00:40:40] I'm currently reading Pippa Granges book Fear Less. Pippa Grange is a sports psychologist who worked with the, um, England football team for a while, bringing quite a different approach. And I mean, she works with, with many other organizations as well, and she comes, um, to, to a very similar place to The Long Win.

[00:40:59] Through her psychologist lens. That's been really fascinating to see a topic that I've sort of been living and breathing and writing about for years, you know, explained in different language in a different way. And so that's kind of enriched my own thinking as I continue to, to develop my thinking around The Long Win.

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:41:16] brilliant.

[00:41:17] Um, my next one is what's the best or most useful bit of advice you've had in your life that you always come back to.

**Cath Bishop:** [00:41:25] Oh, I think, you know, my dad would just always say, just do your best, have a go.

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:41:31] Yeah, have a go try something out. Love that. Great bit of advice there. Um, so thinking about our audience, thinking about the people who are out there, wanting to get a bit more joy in their working lives, I'd love to know what is one really practical bit of advice to our listeners. Something that they could go away right now. Do it today, do it tomorrow. Do it the next day. Um, what would that be and why?

**Cath Bishop:** [00:41:59] It's about asking different questions. I would say, think about the questions that you want to ask before every conversation you had before every meeting, we tend to think about the agenda. I've got to get these points across. I've got to inform, I've got all this content. I've got to sort of shove down people's throats.

[00:42:15] Um, questions I think are much more useful to getting to better decisions, to building collaboration, to understand and connecting with others. So think of some really good questions for the next conversation you have today, what else could you ask? How could you find out something you don't know about people you work with or the people you've got a meeting with?

[00:42:38] What questions can you ask to find out something you don't already know about?

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:42:43] Great. And in some ways that does all of your three things, doesn't it, the three CS, it gives you some clarity about that person. It helps with your collaboration, your relationship, and you'll be learning something about somebody new as well.

[00:42:54] So, great idea. So think about the questions, not just the agenda or what you have to say or the point you [00:43:00] want to get across.

We are nearly out of Cath, but before we finish off, I would love to get our audience to hear a little bit more about where they can find out more about you, where they can read more about your writing and your thinking.

[00:43:13] So Cath, tell everybody a bit more about you. The Long Win where to go to find out more.

**Cath Bishop:** Sure. So, uh, I should be quite easy to find on social media. So I'm @thecathbishop on Twitter. I'm on LinkedIn, I'm on Instagram. My website is [www.Cathbishop.com](http://www.Cathbishop.com) and there's lots of information there about the work I do, the areas, the topics around leadership that I, that I work with facilitating coaching. Speaking and the book is available, um, online or through whatever bookshops that you use. And, you know, I'd love to hear your feedback on the book and the thinking and the articles that I've written around it.

[00:43:53] So please feel free to reach out and get intouch.

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:43:57] Brilliant. So websites, social media, buy the book at your local bookstore or on the big bookstores, we won't mention any of them by name, um, and get in touch. And I know

Cath, our conversations, you love to hear what people think and their feedback and questions and things.

[00:44:12] So make that happen. If you're interested in connecting with Cath, get out there on the social media. Cath a huge, thank you for me for coming on the work joy jam podcast. As usual, I'm fascinated by your thinking and how we can all get better at thinking more long time, whether that's us as individuals doing something as simple as asking different or better questions and our collaboration with people, or as an organization.

So we've got people listening here who are leaders of organizations and are thinking, how do I make my organization better? How do I improve the engagement? Start thinking about those three CS about longer term, thinking about reviewing and reflecting more. So thank you very much again, Cath for your time, and we will hopefully speak to you again soon.

**Cath Bishop:** [00:44:56] pleasure. Thanks for inviting me on.

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:44:59] Thank you.

[00:45:05] I really enjoyed talking to Cath about her insights into how we can all consider redefining what success looks like to think about what it is we need to change in our mindset and our behaviors in our actions. To think about the more long-term sustainable things that could help us be successful in the long term versus the short term thinking. The thing I'm really taking away and it's really sitting with me now is how do we get into that situation where we are thinking about considering, and actually doing the, asking more questions of people. How do we get that on our agenda versus just thinking about what the agenda is or what I want to get across or the presentation I have to share, or the piece of work I need to get finished and to really think about how that question mindset can help us to get clarity and help us to get that constant learning and can really fuel collaboration for the greater good. Remember that you can follow us on Instagram at create work joy and our website is [createworkjoy.com](http://createworkjoy.com). We'd love to hear what you think about the podcasts and any feedback you have so do you keep in touch.