



THE PODCAST

## S1: E6 Sadia Salam Getting Unstuck

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**Beth Stallwood:** [00:00:00] Hello and welcome to the Work Joy Jam podcast. On this episode, we're joined by the marvelous, the Sadia Salam, and we're talking about how you can get yourself unstuck and not be, might be you're stuck with the project, or you're stuck with yourself and your career thinking about where to go to, and that you might be in that stage where you're sitting in that real uncomfortableness where you don't quite know what to do or where to go to.

[00:00:58] And so Sadia has some fantastic advice based on her personal experience and her work with many people as a coach, uh, thinking about how can you start talking about what it is that you need to get unstuck from? Because by talking about it, you're giving it some energy. You're giving it the possibility of moving into something more like action and action is where you really do get unstuck.

[00:01:22] So somethings small, something that you can actually take forward. I had a fantastic time talking to Sadia. I will give you a warning. And the warning is at the end of the episode, like me, you will probably feel quite hungry because we do end up talking about food quite a lot. I hope you enjoy this episode.

[00:01:46] Hello, and welcome to the Work Joy Jam today. We have the fabulous Sadia Salam joining us, and I'm really pleased to have her here and to get into our work joy conversation, to find out what gives Sadia work joy and get her advice and guidance on what you can do to get more work joy in your life.

[00:02:07] Now I'm going to let Sadia introduce herself. So Sadia tell us a little bit about you, what you do and your story.

[00:02:15] **Sadia Salam:** Oh, thank you. And thank you for having me. So I was born in Cardiff, I'm Bangladeshi origin. So my parents were both born in Bangladesh and came over in the sixties, and landed in Wales, which was great.

[00:02:31] And I have two sisters and grew up in Wales the whole time and lost my accent just in case you're wondering I lost it when I went to secondary school. And it never came back, which is a bit of a shame, and I then had the conversation with my parents is as many people do in those days as to whether I was going to do medicine, accountancy or law over cornflakes one morning and I chose law.

[00:02:59] So I was a reluctant lawyer at the beginning, but I must say I then went into law. I became a corporate lawyer and did that for 20 years and I must admit, I actually did love it. It's a great part of my journey and. Now I am a coach and, um, inclusion facilitator, and when I left law a couple of years ago and to set up my business as a coach and, um, inclusion facilitator.

[00:03:26] And I hadn't realized when I did it, why I was doing it, but it all became very clear when I started coaching all the amazing women that I've coached over the last couple of years. And there's a common theme that came up and that was a theme of being stuck. And if I look back at my 20 years, I had real moments and feelings stuck and, you know, stuck when I left my law firm in the city to go and work for a company to go in house stuck when I had that big transition to that kind of the head of legal role and stuck when I decided I. Even after all those years, I didn't want to do the lawyer anymore. And you have those feelings of stuck. And each time I always felt there was something wrong with me. Um, and then I learned through coaching, but actually it was just a sign I wanted to grow.

[00:04:18] And, you know, you know, when we know you, we, when you're hungry, You eat something when you're thirsty, you drink something. And actually when you are stuck, you need to grow. And I took a while to work that out and now I've worked it out. It's my kind of mission to really help all those amazing women out there when they have those feelings of stuck to know that that's a sign of growth and to help them grow.

[00:04:43] I get to spend each day doing that, which is wonderful. And then as an inclusion facilitator a big part of the work I do with diverse diversity and inclusion is to really help organizations attract and retain and promote their diverse talent, which I'm really passionate about, and that that's me now.

[00:05:05] **Beth Stallwood:** Amazing. Thank you so much for sharing your story. I've got images in my head of you sat around a table, eating cornflakes, deciding to be a lawyer and just making it happen from there. I love it. It's such an interesting thing of, you know, deciding to do it and then spending 20 years in that career before moving on and thinking about what's next for you.

[00:05:26] One thing I'm really interested about is this idea of being stuck. And I think from people I talk to from people I coach from all of the clients I work with that moment of being stuck often feels like awkward and horrible and really not knowing what you're supposed to do with it. And I love your thing that it's just, if you can see it as a sign, you need to grow or do something versus a negative, you can actually use that stuck feeling to make good things happen.

[00:05:56] **Sadia Salam:** Absolutely. And because if we don't, if we just sit in that, as you say that uncomfortableness, we go internal don't we, and we just make everything uncomfortable. We make everything wrong. And we come up with a thousand reasons not to do something because we're stuck. It's like that sinking mud, we just keep going down and down and down and less, we grab onto something.

[00:06:18] **Beth Stallwood:** Definitely. And that idea of like you're wading through treacle, trying to work out what's wrong or trying to justify why you feel like that, or trying to find a reason to blame yourself or blame someone else as to why you feel like that when actually it can be reused for good. So what I'm interested, let's, let's head down this road because I think it's a great thing to consider is

when you say the word stuck, it doesn't come to me as something joyful. So I'm thinking, Oh, how does, how does being stuck and working through that relate to getting some work joy. And I'd love to know now it's your special reason. It's your kind of mission for being, it's what you work on with people is how did you get yourself unstuck and find some of the work joy you were looking for and find that growth and find the thing you needed to do.

[00:07:06] And how do you then relate that to helping other people.

[00:07:11] **Sadia Salam:** So when you have that feeling of stuck, I was lucky each time I had that feeling of stuck without really understanding what it was is that you, I reached out to people. So I reached the people that could help me a mentor, a coach. And each time the question was always the same.

[00:07:31] What, what do you enjoy? What makes you happy? Yeah, what you're not happy with. And when you're stuck, you spent a lot of time shouting about what's not working and then you need, and I needed somebody else to say, well, what do you want? What makes you happy? What brings you joy? And by doing that, by focusing on joy and in particular work joy, you know, what do I enjoy in the work environment?

[00:08:00] That really helped me. So what helped me when I was going for partnership, um, in my law firm and I, it was just that I did not enjoy that process and I felt stuck and that's because it wasn't right for me, you know, it was right for me to move in house. And I looked at what I enjoy and I just loved talking to the business, getting to know a business, really getting my teeth into how that business works, which I couldn't do as a private practice lawyer because you have so many different clients who get to know that client onto another client, but there I read, and then I had the call, um, you know, I had that call saying, do you want to come for an interview for the role at, um, uh, the company that I worked for?

[00:08:42] And I said, definitely. And I went, for it, and in that interview, I remember the interview, so, well, they just, one of the questions from this very senior person was what makes you happy? Um, and I love that question. And I talked about food. I talked about walking, um, in the mountains and I immediately lit up and I thought, gosh, I just want, I don't know.

[00:09:07] I don't really care what the role is. If you ask them happy and you really want to hear what makes me happy and we're going to have a whole interview or what makes me happy, I'm joining you because you really prioritize joy and happiness. Actually, that's why I want to do each day as well.

[00:09:26] **Beth Stallwood:** Great. It's so interesting.

[00:09:28] Isn't it? That, that one question tells you that, that is an organization and a person you want to work with because it says something doesn't, it.

[00:09:37] **Sadia Salam:** It really does. And I wasn't expecting it at all because this guy was American. He was quite, you know, I was not expecting that question. I was expecting it all to be about the law and it wasn't.

[00:09:49] **Beth Stallwood:** Isn't that interesting as well. It's so it's nothing to do with the job, nothing to do with anything in the corporate world. It's, it's the question of wanting to know a bit more about you as a real person, as a real human? Yeah, I kind of feel like going, walking in the mountains now you've inspired me. I need to get some time out in the countryside.

[00:10:12] Oh yeah, that'd be good. Um, I think. What you're talking about here is so the moment, you know, and you understand yourself and you're able to say, and know what makes you happy? I think, and I might be wrong here, but I think sometimes when you're in that zone of feeling stuck or feeling a bit, I call it like the negative spiral where one thing is wrong and it just makes everything else feel wrong.

[00:10:35] So no one can make you happy. Nothing you do seems to kind of fix your, put you in the right place. Sometimes it can be really hard to know what makes you happy and I'd be interested to know from you, how do you recognize in yourself, those things that do give you joy and that do make you happy? How do you know what they are?

[00:10:55] **Sadia Salam:** Such a good question?

[00:10:56] And it's really hard when you're feeling stuck because you're right. Your body tenses. You've got a really tense body when you feel stuck when you feel stuck. But for me, I have to step out of that. So I have to make the environment somewhere where I'll relax. So going for a walk really helps me.

[00:11:16] Um, I have to take me out of that kind of tense environment, but I noticed my set for me. I noticed a real lightness. I notice, I smile. I smile really big smile. Not just like a little smile, a huge smile can feel myself smiling and a real,

[00:11:32] **Beth Stallwood:** like a whole face light up your eyes smile.

[00:11:36] **Sadia Salam:** I feel so much lighter.

[00:11:39] I just feel lighter. My shoulders aren't heavy. I can almost feel some heat coming up. You, you know, that feeling of just lightness and happiness, and it's almost, if you want to just keep walking, I just want to keep walking. I don't want to sit down and have a rest. I just want to keep walking. That's my sign.

[00:12:01] That lightness is my sign that I really enjoying something. And sometimes I don't necessarily notice it at that moment. I notice it afterwards.

[00:12:12] **Beth Stallwood:** Yeah.

[00:12:15] **Sadia Salam:** You know, being aware and asking yourself, you know, try and notice these things. Try and notice when you're feeling joy, when you're feeling happy, because you can't just go from one thing to the other, to the other. So you need to make time in your day, where even if you're just drinking your first coffee in the morning or your last glass of water before you go to bed to think about how you felt that day.

[00:12:39] **Beth Stallwood:** Yeah. That's a really good point is that I also think that because our brains are so wired for negativity and for understanding the challenge and, and, and that side of

things, it's so easy to remember something negative that you felt in a day. And so hard to actually recall all the moments of joy that are just tiny little things that happen that do make you smile, or do you make you happy or give you that sense of accomplishment or achievement or whatever it is that gives you joy? It's much harder to recognize it. If you don't spend a little bit of time thinking about it.

[00:13:12] **Sadia Salam:** agree. That is nice thinking about it. You kind of make those happy moments last little longer.

[00:13:19] **Beth Stallwood:** Yeah. It's and yeah. Uh, one thing, um, I talk about work joy quite a lot. Is this idea that work joy isn't about being 100% happy, joyful all the time.

[00:13:32] Because we live in a world of reality and there are always going to be some of the things that don't give you work joy. There's always going to be a difficult conversation to have or something that hasn't worked out, something that you failed in, something that brought you down. There are so many things that can be unjoyful.

[00:13:52] So it's not about. For me, or for us overall, actually really trying to do this 100% of the time. It's about working on what you already have and understanding what you already have, enjoy and cultivating more opportunities to do that, getting the right environment for you to do that, having the right conversations with the right people.

[00:14:13] And I think one of the things that struck me is your, when you said, you know, what I do to get unstuck is the first thing you did was to reach out to someone to help you. And in some ways people find that really hard to do. We often think everyone else is too busy. I don't have an official mentor or an official coach, and I don't know what to do so I'll just try and fix all these problems myself, because I'm, I must be the only one who feels like this. I must be the only one who's struggling. I must be the only one who's stuck yet. Actually, when we reach out is often where we get our best inspiration.

**Sadia Salam:** Absolutely.

[00:14:49] and I, I just thinking here about when you reached out, obviously you talk about mentors and coaches, and I think that mentors and coaches can exist without the official title, that people who give you what you need at that moment in time. And they can be pretty much anyone. They could be somebody you've worked with before they could be somebody.

[00:15:06] Um, they could be a boss or a friend or a family member, even just somebody who gets you and maybe can nudge you in the right direction.

[00:15:15] **Sadia Salam:** Yeah, absolutely. Because as soon as you stop talking about something, it's no longer inside you being used by your, your negative inner voice that grabs hold of it and makes it into something that it's not. So as soon as they're out loud, you've got that. Whoever it is saying, Oh, that's okay. Why don't you speak to so-and-so or, Oh, actually I felt like that too, which is the nicest thing to hear, because you don't feel as if you're on your own and you don't feel as if there's something just wrong with you.

[00:15:48] So that the power, I agree. The power of just talking about it to anyone is a great start. And that's what got me out of my stuckness. Each time I spoke to different people and you're right, the first time I spoke to someone that he wasn't an official. Um, mentor or coach at all second time, it was a really good friend.

[00:16:09] And the third time was a coach. Um, just because I actually knew what a coach was at the time. I didn't know what a coach was the first time around, um, having that conversation was, it was just great. Actually it brought joy, you know, because when you see other people in the office or around you who don't look so happy or might have something on their mind, you're able to talk to them in a very different way because you've had that conversation already.

[00:16:41] **Beth Stallwood:** So really interesting. Now, obviously you're a coach now, so you understand the benefit of coaching. Um, we wouldn't say that you don't need to get a coach because we're both coaches and, uh, we think coaching is important yet. There are so many other things that you can do before you need a coach, or if you can't make a coach happen at that moment in time, is there are people out there who are willing to help and, um, you know, use your network, use your friends, use your family as you did different people.

[00:17:06] And I always think if you. You're right. If you say something out loud, it becomes less of a thing in your head, you know, we do some times I know ID, this really blew things out of proportion in our own brains. And we tell ourselves stories that might not be completely true. And we give ourselves a really hard time.

[00:17:27] And sometimes we might say something to someone and they might not understand what you need or need to do, but they are more likely to say something like, Oh, you probably need to talk to somebody like this or have you, I get those people to say, have you read this book? Or have you watched this YouTube clip or this Ted talk because I found it really helpful and you suddenly get some inspiration that can lead you to action. And I'd be interested to know your thoughts on this, because one of the things I find when you get stuck and it even says it in the word stuck, doesn't it is that you moved to inaction rather than doing something. And then you get stuck. I'm going to use the word stuck again, but you, you, you, you stay in the same place and you go round and round and round versus finding a way out.

[00:18:07] **Sadia Salam:** Exactly. You're right. That then the key to it is taking action. No matter how small that action is, it's taking action. And some people get stuck saying, well, I don't know what action to take.

[00:18:20] Having a conversation is a really easy one. Number one. Um, and just talking about. If you weren't stuck, what would you do? And you know, what does stuck mean? Stuck just means that you're frustrated really. You're frustrated that frustration is stopping you from doing anything because you really want to do something, but you don't know what it is.

[00:18:41] And, and, you know, coaching does help you work out what it is because you know what it is that you really want to do, but you've kind of buried it so deep. I'm put all that sinking mud on top of it. It's hard to work out what you do want, but you're absolutely right. Taking action is the big thing. And for me now I do all sorts of different actions.

[00:19:01] Cause I, I feel stuck all the time. Um, sometimes it's a big stuck feeling like, you know, career transition wise and sometimes it's just little things, much smaller things, but it's the same impact. It. It kind of it's you go into paralysis, you end up doing nothing, you get frustrated and then you beat yourself up about it.

[00:19:18] So when I feel myself going into that pattern of beating myself up, you know, I should have done that. Oh, I must do it properly next time. Or I should, I should. The big one for me when I know I'm saying I should have done this, or I should've done that, or I just don't know what to do. That's my pattern.

[00:19:36] And my signal to me that you are feeling stuck. And so now I actually write it all out. I, that really helps me as an action. Um, I write out what is it that I feel stuck about? What would I do if I didn't feel stuck? What do I really want to do? You know, if there was no for me, the big one is if there was no failure in the world and you really couldn't fail Sadia what would you do?

[00:20:02] Is one of my favorites for writing out and what I would do. And then I always have a conversation with someone and even if it's my husband or whoever I have a conversation. And then it's right three, two, one. My action is, and I take an action.

[00:20:20] **Beth Stallwood:** Yeah. Great. And so great advice that have a conversation right out.

[00:20:26] Do spend some time thinking about it, write down what you actually want to do, get rid of all of that stuff that we convinced ourselves off about. Failure will inevitably come versus actually, this could be a good thing and it's almost then just take any action on that list. Just take one and do it and see what happens and see what momentum that gives you.

[00:20:45] Because once you've done one action, when you start, I feel like the next action becomes easier and the next action becomes slightly easier.

[00:20:53] **Sadia Salam:** I definitely agree. Or the only time when I really use my, my coaches and vibrancy have lots of coaches too, it's working out. What, what, you know, what was the, what was the gift in that being stuck?

[00:21:05] Because often there's a, there's like a secret power in there. Um, that's unique to you that wants to come out. And, and that's where my coach has definitely helped me with. You know, you clearly are. You enjoy public speaking. That's your big thing and your role, wasn't giving you enough opportunity to do that.

[00:21:27] And that's what you really wanted to do. And then you'd go off and do your public speaking and realize that just sets you on fire. And it's the one thing that you haven't been doing for 20 years and you really love doing, it's like little things. Like we can find out the gift.

[00:21:41] Is it, is that it's almost, it's like an internal signal from your body saying, Oh, there's something that wants to come out here. You just need to work it out. You don't have to do that on your own. There are people out there to help you, but it's exciting.

[00:21:57] **Beth Stallwood:** Yeah. And I wonder if, over time and it, obviously, it sounds like you now manage to know and to recognize when you might be going into this space is I wonder that over time, if you can practice this and practice it and practice it because that's how it, we get anything

done is practice isn't it? That actually that internal signal we can change from a feeling of being stuck to a feeling of being excited about what's to come.

[00:22:22] **Sadia Salam:** Yeah, absolutely. And that's, and that's what I have now. That is a good job. Because as you know, when you have your own business, after going from being employed, you have that feeling a lot.

[00:22:33] And so now, so excited feeling that you say, which is really good. That's what gets me through now, because if I just focused on that stuck feeling in it and I had that negative connotation with it, I don't think I'd be doing half as much as I'm doing right now.

[00:22:53] **Beth Stallwood:** Yeah. And I feel like maybe being able to understand and to work through and find out what you're supposed to do and what, what this, what the signal is telling you.

[00:23:03] It's like you're knowing is that your intuition is they're telling you something and nagging at you to do something. Is how brave it could make you, if you took that with you. So you talk about some of the gifts that they're stuck feeling can give you, or going through that processes. Actually really listening to it rather than I feel like sometimes we squash these things down and then they go deep on it.

[00:23:25] You said like before the they are so deep inside was all like mud on top of them, et cetera, is it could make you brave and bold and ready to go and do something different. And, you know, you've made big decisions in your career. Like, you know, moving. In house, you didn't know what I was going to be like, you're not experienced before.

[00:23:42] Um, loving it, enjoying it, finding it great, and then, you know, you can, it sounds like, and I might be completely wrong here, but it sounds like you still really liked your job, but you had this kind of nagging, stuck feeling that you needed to do something different.

[00:23:56] **Sadia Salam:** Exactly. It was. Um, yeah, it was a really brave move and I'm glad I did it, but it wasn't, it wasn't, there was anything wrong, you know, and I loved being head of legal.

[00:24:05] I loved my team. I loved all of it, but I also knew that there was other things and more things and coaching in particular that lit me up in a way that my legal job just didn't anymore. And it used to because it changes, you know, what lights you up today may not light you up tomorrow. And that's okay but for me, I wanted to follow joy. I could have chosen fear. I could have said, no, this is a secure job. I'm just going to stick at it, stick at it until I retire in how many years, um, and just carry on. Or actually, I don't know what the future holds, but I know I want joy in my life. Um, I really want joy in my life.

[00:24:51] That's what makes me get up each day. And for me, that's what life's about is to follow the joy. And if you find something that brings you joy, and for me, that [00:25:00] was coaching, then it actually became a much easier decision because you know, when you coach each day, you say to your clients, choose courage over fear, be brave, do what lights you up. And if I didn't do that, then it was going to be a downward spiral and something that I loved and a career that I loved, wasn't going to end that way because I'd already found something that brought me joy.



[00:25:29] **Beth Stallwood:** Yeah, and I love the, um, what you're saying there about follow the joy and if you know what it is, follow it and find it and, um, hold onto it and it can change. And sometimes. I think we can all get a bit, once I do this. And I see it so much in the corporate world, as well as another places, but where people are, I'm aiming for this promotion, I made me for partnership. I'm aiming to be this level of person or a head of, or I'm aiming for this next career goal. When I get that, I will find the joy. And a lot of people then getting a bit disappointed because. You know, as the world is not everything within that job as perfect when you've achieved it, it's like, well, what next is that ability to adjust and understand and to know what brings you joy now, not what, what you joined before.

[00:26:18] And to understand that the work may not always be that thing. And you're lucky in some ways that the thing that brought you joy is something that you can do as a career that you can set up your business, that you can do it. Some people will be finding joy and following the joy outside of work, as well as in work but that helps them bring more joy at work because they've got something else that has it. So I always meet people with amazing hobbies and interesting things and creativity and all the different stuff that people do outside of work, or even like side hustles as well. Like people who do jobs on the side, as well as, um, kind of a corporate career.

[00:26:52] Can be a way of making that follow the joy happen as well? Mm,

[00:26:56] **Sadia Salam:** Definitely. What helped me with, with joy in my, both my, um, corporate jobs really was what do I really love inside and outside work. And for me it was food. I'm a real food. It might be that it's the Bangladeshi origin in me, but I'm a real foodie and I don't drink do alcohol was never something, um, for me, but food was. And so whenever. You know, both jobs. We always had great meals, restaurants, you know, team, team outings, or we used to get people to come in and you have cultural events when they whether it was Eid of Diwali or anything. I used to be always on the committee to kind of delicious food and kind of enjoying festivities like that. And I that's really got, got me through because you'd, you'd have bad weeks as you say, but if I knew that there was going to be a meal somewhere at the end, something social with great food, honestly, that would get me through it. It's like, Oh no, we've got the, you know, these partner dinners where the partners take out a team of whoever, and you always go somewhere nice for these dinners.

[00:28:14] And they have them every couple of months. And that was a real highlight. And then you'd have the festive meals as well. So then you'd have at least two or three. And I loved it. And those events were always great because everybody is just so much more relaxed when there's food and people talk.

[00:28:36] And that was, they were real work joy moments to me. And I I'd encourage those.

[00:28:41] **Beth Stallwood:** And I love what you're saying that we'll talk about food in a second, cause I think is very important for connection and collaboration. Um, but this idea that. Because you're interested in it. You got yourself involved in the committee or the organizing group or whatever it was that made these things happen.

[00:28:58] And I think that's such a great way of finding some joy in an organization is there is always some kind of network committee group that is going on. That's always looking for volunteers

and how much joy you get from working with different people from being able to create something like an event or something fun or something interesting for people to learn about such a good idea.

[00:29:20] And then let's talk about food for a moment because we got onto this subject of food and how it is one of those things. So I think there are two things in the world that are amazing at creating conversation and joining people together and getting people to be a bit more human. And for me, those two things are food and music.

[00:29:42] Those two things I think always work, but for you, obviously it's the food side of things. Tell me a little bit more about when you're in that zone with colleagues, when you're enjoying some food or a celebration or something, what happens there that's different to our everyday lives.

[00:30:01] [00:30:00] **Sadia Salam:** It becomes about the food. So it's not about me, um, which helps me. It's about the food. It's about talking about what we like. It's always positive things with food. You always point out, or that was delicious or what, how was that? Can I try a bit and it just invites conversations. People relax around food. They really do, because it's all about the food. And as humans, we all like food and people that go to these events like food, if you don't like food, people, wouldn't like they wouldn't go, but you get much more diversity at these events. Um, because everybody likes food. It's not about, um, an interest that some people like sports, some people don't, um, everybody wants to eat and especially in work environment, people get very hungry and can't be bothered to go out and have the boring sandwich every day. So you get everybody going to these events, you get really good turnout of people that you would might not have bumped into for ages haven't spoken to you for a while or completely different people. And you talk about something other than yourself, it also then leads on to things about yourself that, Oh, I'd love to know how to make this and then somebody will start talking about having made it, or, you know, you'll talk about, I talk about a lot of Bangladeshi food because I love it. And that's why I've grown up with that often comes up in conversation, but then you think how often would my ethnic origin come up in conversation in the workplace?

[00:31:27] It doesn't. But by talking about those types of things, it brings my whole self to work. I like talking about it and people who may have had the question in their mind, you know, where does she originate from? May not have asked it, but then you start talking about it. It gets rid of that barrier. And you think you have that with food?

[00:31:46] It opens up so many things because people will talk about the first time they had a burger or the first time they had this or why they like this and why they like that. And they relate it to their out of work lives. Yeah, which is key to bringing your whole self to work and key to having the conversations that talk about you as a human being.

[00:32:07] **Beth Stallwood:** Yeah. I'm thinking that number one, I'm really hungry. I'm having this, had that conversation. I'm like, what am I going to have next? Um, but I also, I'm really interested in it. Probably a nice little segue here into how this conversation leads on to maybe some of your other work beyond the coaching, into inclusion, diversity, facilitation of more inclusive practices and workplaces.

[00:32:36] And I'd be really interested in how that brings you joy and how. How more inclusion in the world, which, you know, I am fully, fully up for how that can actually help to build more joyful workplaces.

[00:32:52] **Sadia Salam:** It's key. I think it's really key because when you've got an inclusive work environment, you've got people that will talk about what brings them joy and introduce that into the workplace.

[00:33:01] For example, when I often go into, organizations to work out. You know how they can be more inclusive. I sit with groups, um, their employee groups, and we talk about what makes them happy. And what stops them from being happy. They are always my two questions. And then you want to do more of what makes them happy.

[00:33:22] You know, we often focus on inclusion on what's stopping people being happy, and you absolutely have to address those, but they're often the easier ones because you just address those, um, on what's stopping people may happy, but what don't forget, what makes people feeling happy and what makes them feel happy is, um, Having events where they can meet the people in their offices because so many people now go in or well, when they used to be able to go in, but you just work with your team and you work with whoever you're working with on that particular project, you don't work with a hundreds of people in that actual office. You don't get to know lot of amazing people which is why you join organizations. It's not just to work with five or six amazing people, which is important, but you want to be part of a larger organization and learn from many other people and chat to other people as humans. We want that connection.

[00:34:12] And one of the things that comes up each time is events, events, where everybody attends. And I always say every organization, you need an event for every single festival. Because by doing that, but for choosing Diwali, Christmas Eve, Hanukkah, whatever's going on, you will be teaching people about all the different cultures out there, different religions out there, which are really important to those people who, who are religious, you know, um, you know, I'm Muslim and when there's an Eid festival or an Eid meal out there, I love it. I feel really proud. You know a day that I'd normally be at home with family and talking about those things and the conversations are very different at those events. So that's why I always say, please celebrate all the festivals. It doesn't, you know, people can bring food in, we don't want to budgets and issue, but celebrate all the amazing festivals that we have in this, in this world, you know, celebrate them.

[00:35:14] It's a one time of year that you can celebrate it for every festival. And that I find really helps inclusion cause people want. Want to be invited to bring it their whole self, to work, to talk about their boundaries, to talk about what they enjoy inside and outside work. And we need to kind of create the environment for that, for them to do that.

[00:35:37] And when we talk about what makes sense, I'm happy, lots of other things come up, you know, team nights out, et cetera, all sorts of things.

[00:35:44] **Beth Stallwood:** [00:35:44] I love it. And, uh, again, it's so important that it's, it seems to be like the soundtrack to everything that's good in your career. And what you do now is this question.

[00:35:55] What makes you happy for yourself? Other people asking it, prompting people to think about it. And I think it's such an important one. And it's something that you probably wouldn't usually hear so much in the business context. What makes you happy? It's like you are, people will ask you what makes you work really hard and what motivates you to do even more work versus actually what makes you happy? And how can we use that in the working context to be brilliant and to work together and to find amazing ways of working and what you were talking about there, about, you know, the festivals and making a big deal of them. What a wonderful thing to do is to just celebrate.

[00:36:29] And that's the thing about festivals, they're always a celebration and they, they're a celebration of something. There's something that, you know, triumph of good over evil or, um, you know, a special moment in time and something that everyone can get involved in and learn through and connect through and start to understand your colleagues in a bit more detail and a bit more human way.

[00:36:52] And obviously you'll get more excited because they usually involve food too, because celebrations always do.

**Sadia Salam:** [00:36:57] They do, and celebrations are always about happiness aren't they.

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:37:01] Yeah. And there's always joy to be found there so I love that idea and, you know, little things like team nights out, or finding ways to do things with your colleagues that make you understand each other as humans versus as people you work with or people who work over there who I've never actually really had a conversation with.

[00:37:20] Um, yeah, such a great, um, consideration for us all and for organizations and I, the other thing I would suggest here and is - but don't necessarily wait for, if you work in a big organization, don't wait for someone to organize those things for you. You can do it in your team. Can't you can do it in your area or in your office or on the floor that you work on or wherever you work in whichever context there's, you could agree as a team that you're going to celebrate all these things and you'll bring in some food on each of those days.

[00:37:51] And so often we wait for people to do these things versus just say, let's just do it and see what happens. Absolutely.

**Sadia Salam:** [00:37:58] And one thing I've seen is people will say, so it's Diwali, this restaurant's doing, you know, you can get this type of food from here. What do people go out by bringing out, get different kinds of lunch that they don't normally get.

[00:38:09] And they all come in together and sit down together and eat it.

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:38:14] Just the way of making it happen and consideration and thinking about things. So brilliant. Um, so thinking about the future for you, obviously you're in the world of coaching and helping people and helping organizations, how do you get your joy now.

[00:38:34] **Sadia Salam:** Oh gosh. So joy is such a big part. It's, it's, it's much easier now to kind of have so much more of it each day, which, um, Very happy with, um, I, I spent a lot, a lot more time

going out walking and, um, as you know, I've got a new puppy, which is just so exciting, um, and brings joy all the time, all the time.

[00:38:57] And we've got lovely parks and places we can go walking. So I, I do go and have so many more walks in nature than I've ever had before. In my career and that's huge for me because I love it. And it gives me my Headspace and my creative time and time for me actually, which is really nice just, and actually it's something it's funny, cause it's something I could have easily fitted in, in my, when I had my corporate job, I'm walking outside a lot more than I did, but I, I didn't prioritize that, but I do now. So I go for a lot more walks and runs outside. I spend a lot more time outside, which is huge for me. Um, I still go out for my meals. Oh yes. But what happens a lot. So, you know, this year lockdown has been really tough. It's been really tough. Of course I've had my takeaways, but you know, not going out for meals has been tough. Um, and I have a lot more family time, so, um, I've got to teach children and we spend a lot of time outside.

[00:39:55] One of the big things that came out of lockdown for us was as a family, we've got this new thing of playing hide and seek, which we never used to really do as a family outside in the park. But we spent a lot more time in the park now and play a lot more games, um, which brings me a lot of joy. So I think for me, it's still food and outdoors.

[00:40:15] Am I two common themes of bringing me joy in it? And it's still the same even now, but I just get to do more of it

[00:40:22] **Beth Stallwood:** And, and, and it's interesting you say that you could have done more of it in your corporate life when you were there. But you didn't prioritize it. And now it's almost that you've found a way to make it more of a priority within your working life and to spread that joy with your children and your family and the dog which sounds amazing. And it's interesting as well, just thinking about the theory of joy and how hard it has been for so many people around lockdown yet also how many people have found new and interesting things to do with their families, things to do that they've not been able to do before.

[00:41:04] Obviously we're sad about not being able to go out for dinner as much as we would like to, and things like that, but things like games and having fun and playing. And I always remember, um, Brene Brown talking about this and you know, I love it with Brene Brown talking about this thing that people who live wholehearted lives and are able to be who they want to be and be successful and, you know, deal with things in the right way and live with, without the shame and things like that. She has, you know, there's so much to talk about. Brene Brown is one of the things she says is that those people who are able to do that, find ways to have fun, to play, to mess around, to fall around.

[00:41:40] And it sounds like you've managed to include way more than that in your life as well.

**Sadia Salam:** [00:41:46] I have it was it was very much a conscious decision. It's like, well, you're making this change it. You can, you know, this changes something from scratch. So you've got to make it what you really want it to be as is then that's what I tell my clients every day, you know, prioritize your needs.

[00:42:02] And it's, it all comes down to self care as well. You know, we've all got those buckets of energy that we've got to refill. Um, yeah. And how do you feel them? You know, joy and happiness is, is a big proportion of that, that to replenish that energy and it's working out what does replenish your energy. And I was lucky that, you know, outdoor time and food, um, and alone time, they're not difficult to do.

[00:42:33] Yeah. The things that are kind of accessible aren't they they're ready to go. You don't need lots of money or you don't need lots of time to do any of those things. You just have to decide to do them and then you can go and make them happen. Yeah those things will be different for everybody.

And they say, some people were like, Oh no, walk isn't my thing but I'd love to go to a yoga class. Some people will be like, no yoga class is not for me. I need to be creative and we'll play an instrument or draw or meditate and whatever those self care, joy things are. And I still think we need a new name for this like self care thing, I think is even more important than self care, but I don't have a better word for it yet, but the idea that whatever takes your bucket, overflow it overflowing is the thing that you need to go and do more of and build it into your life and make it happen. So coming to the end, I have some quick fire questions. Are you ready for them? Yes. Right. First one. So actually in work joy context, um, so getting into the work versus the wider sense of joy, what is one thing that, you know, for sure if you do it or you get it or you experience it, you will get some work joy from it?

**Sadia Salam:** Delicious food.

Excellent. Um, what book or are you currently reading or would you really recommend to all of our readers?

**Sadia Salam:** [00:44:00] I'm rereading "The Big Leap" by Gay Hendricks, which I have comes out every six months or so. I love it.

It's all about self-sabotage.

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:44:18] I have not read that one. I'm going to put it on my list right now. Um, what is the best or most useful, a little bit of advice that you always come back to

**Sadia Salam:** [00:44:33] Follow joy soon as you feel it, follow it,

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:44:40] Love that, feel it and follow it.

[00:44:43] Um, What is your one super practical bit of advice that our listeners could go and really easily do today, tomorrow the next day, build into everyday life that you think would help them get more joy in them.

[00:44:58] **Sadia Salam:** [00:44:58] I find a piece of music, a song or something that gets you into that. I'm happy, joyful mood and play it and then it's amazing what opens up for you when you're in that joyful, playful, happy mood. It's amazing. What joy and happiness you'll see. Brilliant. I always call that. What's your theme tune? What's the one that will get you on a dance floor. Feeling amazing. Dancing like an idiot, any of those things. So, yeah great idea. What's your tune. I'd love to know. I've got a few,

**Sadia Salam:** [00:45:33] but what I really like “The Best” by Tina Turner that gets you up every time.

[00:45:40] **Beth Stallwood:** Yeah. It's a classic. You can't go wrong with a bit of Tina Turner. Definitely love that. So where can our audience find out more about you? What you do, your work and all of those things.

[00:45:54] If they want to hear more or get in touch with you.

[00:45:57] **Sadia Salam:** [00:45:57] Oh, thank you. So I have a website, [www.sadiasalam.com](http://www.sadiasalam.com) - I'm on LinkedIn and Instagram.

[00:46:06] **Beth Stallwood:** Brilliant. And what we would do is we will put these links into our posts on this podcast as well, so that people can click straight through. Sadia it's been fantastic talking to you.

[00:46:17] Thank you so much for coming along for sharing your joy and for your brilliant advice that have feel the joy and follow the joy. Such great advice for everyone here. So thank you so much for joining us.

**Sadia Salam:** Thank you it's been a real pleasure, Beth.

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:46:34] Thank you for listening to this episode, I think Sadia has some really great and interesting advice around what to do if we're getting stuck and how you might at the moment, be cheesy, but a fair and not knowing what to do, but how maybe you could choose to follow some joy in her life.

[00:46:51] What are the quotes that she said that for me is and really landed with me. And one thing that is so in line with what we talk about and the create work joy very of life. And that's around the fact that what lights you up today might not light you up tomorrow. So you can work on your joy right now. And you know, tomorrow, a couple of years, a decade or so, the same things might not bring you joy anymore.

[00:47:17] So it's an ongoing piece of work. It's an ongoing exploration to find out what gives you joy now. And it's so important for us to all remember that and to be open to it. So advice to come back to follow the joy, as soon as you feel it, try to understand it, try to follow it and see where it all leads you.

[00:47:37] I hope you enjoyed this episode with work jam, do, go and listen to some of our other episodes, listen to different speakers and find out different perspectives on advice. Guidance top tips, uh, little things that you can do to help you create and cultivate some joy in your working life and do let us know what you're doing.

[00:47:56] Let us know the action you're taking. What's inspired you on the Instagram or on LinkedIn at @createworkjoy. Thanks.