



THE PODCAST

## S1: E15 Kate Goodger Hit Pause

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**Beth Stallwood:** Welcome to the Work Joy Jam podcast. In this episode, I am joined by the fantastic Dr. Kate Goodger. Kate is a trained psychologist. She's a sports psychologist. She's worked with numerous Olympic teams through summer and winter games to help people get their best performance and what a great person to have on to think about how do we get our best performance and what we're trying to do around joy and joy in our working lives.

Kate and I have a really interesting discussion which comes round to the theme of sometimes we need to hit pause we need to think about what we're doing. We need to make sure that we're working with our logical brain, with the things that actually makes sense or the things that are actually true versus some of the stories that we make up for ourselves.

I always find every conversation I have with Kate's fascinating. She's such a great thinker, and explains some really complicated, complex, psychological things in really easy to understand nuggets all for great, great advice. I hope you enjoy this episode.

[00:01:46] Hello and welcome to the Work Joy Jam podcast. In today's episode, we have a fantastic Kate good to with us. And I am now going to hand over to Kate to introduce herself and to tell us her story so far Kate, over to you.

**Kate Goodger:** Hi, Beth. thanks for the invitation to be in the session today. I'm really excited to be able to have a natter with you. By way of background about a thousand years ago, I started life as a PE teacher. I had two real passions, which was sport and helping people, and that was in secondary schools and certainly teenagers are a baptism of fire in terms of, of working with them and getting them engaged, and during that time I had my second kind of passion, which was really around learning and using that learning to help individuals.

So I did my masters back at Loughborough and as a PE person, one of the things I was really fascinated was the psychology of people and performance. So a long version of that short is that I ended up then taking on a PhD back at Loughborough while teaching at the same time. And it was a wonderful blend of being able to use my passion with teaching, but also being able to understand how do people get the very best out of themselves?

What are the things that get in the way, how might we challenge ourselves? And about 2002, I started to work with elite athletes, that was partly because I wanted to get my license, but also to

help pay the rent at the time, and since then I've expanded, my experience and career and very fortunately have worked with teen GB now at seven different Olympics, summer, winter games, , which has been incredible and more laterly as I've had my own family and wanted to travel less, the transference of that kind of performance thinking and the psychology of performance to other areas of life and other sectors so that's included medicine and healthcare services, businesses and then more recently working alongside you in the Diversity and Inclusion space, so that's been the journey to this point.

**Beth Stallwood:** It's fantastic to hear that Kate and your career is really interesting and to how you've taken your passions and expanded them and thought about them and obviously gone really deep into them with a PhD.

[00:04:03] And obviously that makes you a doctor, which is very exciting, but also the experience across so many different types of industry from, you know, talking about that from corporate things. But to elite sport and what we can learn from the sporting world. So I'm really interested to dig into that, to dig into your thinking and your experience and what you've learned through all of those different experiences and how we might be able to look at this from the perspective of getting more joy in your life, more joy in your work, and taking some of your amazing insight from there. So question for you around work joy is when I say something like work joy to you, what is it that you think individuals can do to bring a bit more joy into their working life?

**Kate Goodger:** Good questions straight off the they're Beth. If I start my to start in, just, just take what works joy means to me. And I guess my, my experience and understanding it from a personal perspective there's a highlighted a bit in my story, having that sense of passion and purpose has always been critical in helping me feel satisfied in work, happy in work, joyous in work, confident in work.

[00:05:21] If I wasn't doing something that helped to serve a purpose for me or ignited some of my points that those were the hard days, I think that you've hit upon something that's really important that there are so many structures and features of work that can make joy less. That can make it mundane and just hard work and we don't always work with people that we get along with well. So that, that concept of work joy, I think is really a powerful one. And if I take it into deliberately the world of sports, we might not necessarily think about it being hugely important, or where does it fit into that? But thinking about athletes that I've worked with that have been the most successful and that's not necessarily being medalist sometimes it's, you know, being the best competitor they possibly could be, but they just weren't good enough to deliver a metal, but it's that level of satisfaction and personal accomplishment that they felt at the end of it. Sometimes that was a metal sometimes not, but those individuals, a distinguishing feature for them was the love of their sport and their love for what they did and the joy that they found around it. Difficulties came for other athletes, and my PhD was actually in the opposite of work, joy was in burnout. And for those individuals that were really struggling in sports, it was often that sport had become joy less for them they'd fallen out of love with the thing, often got to the point of resenting, what they were doing. Their passion had become a job and a day job.

So I think what joy is really important for any individual and for me, it really comes down fundamentally to those things around passion and purpose and, and every career. Every profession

people take on it's an integral ingredient, but I don't think we're spending enough time thinking about it.

**Beth Stallwood:** Yeah, it's really interesting. You talking about that and the idea of passion and purpose, which comes up so much in many, many conversations that I've been having with people about work joy on the podcast, beyond the podcast, in the coaching program around sometimes, and this might be interesting talking about where you find that people had the burnout, sometimes people found that what was their passion 10, 15 years ago, or what they thought their passion would be when they trained for it. It changes over time and we don't always spend enough time thinking about actually, what's my passion now, what is my purpose now? And how, how has that changed? And almost we get on the career rollercoaster that, that takes us in one direction it might not be the direction that we're really looking for anymore.

**Kate Goodger:** Absolutely Beth and the kind of original work it was done around when I was in exactly that, that people often entered into something that they were really lit up about. They had to kind of be a spark almost in order for somebody to then burn out.

[00:08:09] And this was work that was to be done on volunteers that were working in, drug addiction units and, and that kind of sector. And for those individuals, you know, almost their passions became the bits that forced them to become disillusioned in the end. So I think you're right, that we get into routines and habits and patterns of working out and we stop taking that, that check in on ourselves and how we're doing, and sometimes make unhelpful assumptions that if we go down a particular path, then we'll be happy kind of when we get there, when we've achieved this, or we've stepped up or we've done this new particular project, as opposed to just bringing it more into the moment into the now and what really matters and am I living the life I want to. And actually, where is the joy in my life?

**Beth Stallwood:** I'm really interested about this, you know, the idea that we follow that path and we're hoping that somehow magically at the end as a path, wherever that may be. So I imagine, and tell me if I'm wrong here.

[00:09:14] So for in the, in the elite sporting world, there could be, I will be happy if I win the medal. Yeah. I will be happy if I do this. If I manage to make this race or this time, or there's something. Actually I think thought work joy and for the people I've spoken to about more work joy is the joy is often in the daily, small little things versus the big outcome at the end.

Yet a lots of things in work are pushing towards a big outcome versus reflecting on what's good right now.

**Kate Goodger:** I think there's a, there's a few different levels there, in what you're picking up Beth. I think there's part of the realities of work. There are some things, as we said earlier, that it just less joyful than others, that are part of the territory, they simply are aspects of work. And I guess what we can do sometimes is get really frustrated about those things, and get really upset by them when they are just a fact, there are a match, of course previously it might've been the commute to work and people would moan and complain about that commute to work. But that, that was the choice that they've made to, to undertake that particular job and that they may have had to take that job because there weren't other options, but we can get into a habit where we're resenting things that

are simply part of the territory of, of needing to go to work, which is slightly separate from what is then our responsibility and in terms of, of our responsibility, this is more the internal stuff. I think there's a couple of different important features there. And this was shown to me for about 10 years ago by one of my mentors. And we were talking about the concept of happiness, and it's the idea that you can, there's happiness through being, and there's happiness to having.

And what we tend to do is get the balance wrong between those. So the balance in terms of. Of having is more if I have this job or if I have that particular, you know, possession, , or if I achieve this, then I'll be happy. So we can often allow our pleasure or happiness or joy to be contingent upon something.

[00:11:20] And that sometimes leads to unhelpful expectations for us. Whereas being happy is about how you see yourself. It's about being comfortable in your own skin. It's knowing what you really stand for. What values matter to you and it's back to that purpose part. So I think when we're thinking about joy, there's a piece here which is recognition and awareness.

Sometimes it just sucks because it is work and it's that's life. But actually what we can do more proactively is how we're taking care of ourselves. And that balance between being happy and doing the things that nourish us versus the idea of having, if I have these things and I'll be happy but we tend not to be richer as a consequence of the half part, the emphasis and the work needs to be on taking time consciously to reflect on the being. And that's to your point that we change life changes. We go through different stages of life and reconnecting rechecking checking in with that side devices is really critical.

[00:12:17] And again, Athletes that have been through multiple Olympic cycles and had grown up and matured through their sport. They will constantly to recheck that. Who were they? What was their identity? Not just as an athlete, but becoming a parent or being a partner to somebody else.

**Beth Stallwood:** There are so many things I want to pick up on from what you just said.

[00:12:37] I've made some notes and scribbled and highlighted things. I'm going to pick up on a few as we

I was loving it all. I was so deeply into it. I was like, I need to come back to this so that I don't lose it. The first one I made a big highlight and squiggled round is the fact that we make choices and I think we make more choices than we are often aware of. And even if those choices are hard choices, they might be the choice you wanted to make. They are inevitably at some point our choice. So you mentioned that like somebody who's taken a job that requires a commute and you might not like the commute, but it's just part of the territory of work. And one of the things we talk about a lot in the work joy theory of life is in every job, whatever you do, even if you are working in your completely purpose, passion fille for yourself, in whatever context, however, you know, you might look to people and go, oh, they've got it nailed is there is still stuff in their working life that they find annoying and frustrating. Yeah, it's not, I don't think work will ever be 100% joyous happy. It's just not like that. And it's, for me, it's more around how do we understand the choices that we've made and whether they were the right choices and reflect on them, but also to be okay, that the fact that it's not a hundred percent all the time, it's okay to have a bad day.

It's okay to [say you don't like something about your job. It's about. Is there more that you do? Like then you don't like, is there, have you actually thought about all the good things that happen in a day or are you focusing? And I might come to the psychology of this in a moment. If you don't mind, are you spending your time thinking, reflecting on the things that have brought you joy during a day or during a week or during a month, or, or are you focusing on the one thing that annoys you and spending all your brain power on the frustration or the annoyance versus the happy.

**Kate Goodger** Okay, can I add, can I add just a couple of things with what you said, that, that word choice that you've picked up on that that's so, so important because when we are experiencing the unhelpful emotions, like anxiety, stress, frustration, often those are related to whether we feel like we're in control of something.

[00:14:45] Or do we feel like we've got options? Whether we feel like we have choice. So we always have. Choices. Viktor Frankl in his book ,The Meaning of Life talks about that. That's one of our fundamental features that we have when we appear to have nothing else, you know, writing as a psychiatrist in Auschwitz, that we have a choice of, of how we want to respond to a situation.

[00:15:06] That internal choice is something that we have. It doesn't mean, as you said, Choices are easy, but holding onto that one simple concept that you do have choice and that when you're thinking about that choice, the next simple question is, well, what's the consequence of these choices. So a choice can be to do nothing or a choice might be to act what's the consequence.

[00:15:27] And can you live with that particular consequence. So that word choice is incredibly empowering to people. And then the other part that I really picked up on what you talked about is the reality is not all of work is going to be great a hundred percent of the time. Life isn't like that. And we are naive if we think that we have to work actively to find joy and to accept the bad days and the good days. In equal measure, but fundamental to that, I think is also the concept of acceptance.

[00:15:56] So acceptance isn't passive rollover give up acceptance it's recognizing the things that you can change and things that you can't, the things that really matter right now and the things you just need to put in a bucket and not waste energy on, it's the acceptance of stuff that's hard and you might need to work through.

[00:16:14] And the acceptance of emotion that you're sitting with and emotion is just our mind saying. "Hey pay attention, I got some stuff I want you to deal with here". So that, that concept of acceptance, I think, is equally powerful, alongside, choice to enable people to have that joy. So there are simple concepts that we can rely on and practice everyday, and the emphasis really is on the idea of practice or identify.

[00:16:38] The choices and practice making those choices and considering the consequences, but then also practicing that skill or acceptance of being in the moment right now. What is happening with me? What can I change? What content, where should I put my energy? Where am I just losing energy or wasting it? I'm going to stick it in the bucket right now.

[00:16:58] **Beth Stallwood**: Yeah, I love that. And the idea of acceptance and, and understanding what choices you make. And I just sit here and think that I like to have what I call a No Moan zone around me. That is if I'm going to moan about something, but not do anything about it. I am wasting

my energy and probably the energy of people around me because moaning has apart from making you feel good for about five minutes. When you get it off your chest, it doesn't really do anything. So what are the practices that I like to have is if I'm moaning about something, I have to make a choice to either act on it or put it away. Yeah. And let it go. And sometimes that's really hard because you sometimes don't want to let it go.

[00:17:34] But if you can't change it, if it's something that just cannot be changed, if you don't have influence over it, if you can't make it happen, the person whose energy you're wasting is actually yourself. And you could be putting that energy from moaning into like really good use, finding something else or finding something different to do that might have more joy within it.

**Kate Goodger:** [00:17:52] A few, a few years back. Yeah. , when I started working more in the corporate world, I did work in education in schools and with a set of teachers, we kind of developed this, principle, which was about the tantrum mat. Which is exactly what you've described, that there's part of our brain that brings this emotion out sometimes kind of raw, really powerful emotion, sometimes quite toxic internally and we end up spraying everywhere else and on other people.

[00:18:19] But it's when you've got that real frustration with somebody has behaved in appropriately, you know, in the staff room or you've got more work to do. And it seems endless that you've got this expansive emotion that comes, but effectively what part of your brain does you just mentioned, you going to sit on this tantrum mat and you're sat there and you're just circling on the problem and you're just feeding the problem and feeding that emotion and nothing is actually changing.

[00:18:43] You're not making any difference to the circumstances at all, which goes to your point that you want to move from being problem focused and absorbed, and sometimes to be really hard playing the victim mode with that. But other times, just sitting with this emotion and not doing anything with it, you want to move from being problem-focused to solution focused, which isn't about having a magic answer, but it is about developing a plan. What's the first simple thing that you could do to help move yourself forward. So whether that is sometimes, you know, somebody that's upset you writing the draft email of what you really want to say to that person, write it out fully.

[00:19:18] Don't do any edits right out, but then put it in draft, do not hit, send, put it in the draft box and the next day go back and read it. And what still matters were still really, really important to you. And just by slowing our system down. I'm doing a one practical thing in like writing out or developing a written plan or talking to a friend to get your, your thoughts more managed that one simple step begins to move us from being problem absorbed on our tantrum mat not merely anywhere. To being more solution focused. And that feeds our system that helps our emotions to go. Okay. So you're going to do something about this, right? I can start hitting you with less intense emotions and helps you to move forward. The worst thing for us to do is to sit in active or passive and not make choices or decisions.

**Beth Stallwood:** So interesting. And I, I am totally, if you don't mind going to coin the term tantrum mats and use it because it's a great term and I will quote you every time to say it's such a brilliant way of thinking about it is. It is true. We, you know, it, those moments where maybe we have made mountains where mole hills once stood, because it's something that's frustrated us or it's, it's hit a

nerve or it's often I find it's when things go against your values or I get, you know, it doesn't seem quite, it doesn't fit quite right.

[00:20:37] And you want to, you know, shout at someone or tell them they're stupid or do something that, you know, probably isn't the right thing to do. And instead it just goes round and round and round and round and round in your head. Is that idea that you can take some action, not be passive around it to just find something that you can do, even if it is just talk to a friend to get it off my chest.

I just need to, you know, write that email. Remember not to send it or have auto send on your emails because that could be what I would call a career limiting, move to the wrong person. I think there is something about that. Isn't it? Yeah, something happens in your brain and in your body where suddenly taking some form of action, not being a passive passive within it, not being in victim mode, not being in blame mode, but in action mode.

[00:21:25] It kind of, and that's your psychologist. So you will understand what's actually happening your brain. For me, it sounds like, and it feels like my brain has calmed down a bit and is able to deal with it more rationally than when I'm in my tantrum mat mode.

[00:21:40] **Kate Goodger:** A hundred percent. And that's effectively what we want to do is to try and slow on our system.

[00:21:46] So I'm not going to go into, to bring in anatomy, but effectively we are wired still around survival instincts. And so in your impulsivity, reactivity fight flight freeze, they are great mechanisms within our system if you live in the jungle, But most of us don't know, we're not in an environment where we have to be on a higher alert mode.

[00:22:10] So something that part of our system sometimes act in our best interest, but not in a helpful way, such as when we react in a meeting, if we feel we've been publicly undermined and that reaction could be that we have a strong word with somebody in front of other people, which we later regret, or it could be that we actually push our emotions down and withdraw.

[00:22:32] Yeah, we feel embarrassed. So we actually take our dissatisfaction elsewhere and we don't raise the things that we should do. So you're right the part of our brain is wired around these emotions and it's the important thing is to recognize that's how we're built. So don't beat yourself up about it because your emotions are going to be at play.

[00:22:50] And they're a wonderful thing to have, but sometimes they don't give us the response as most helpful in that circumstance. So yes, your emotions will do that. But by slowing things down the system down, hitting pause, taking the breath, sleeping on something, going for a walk, switching task, stepping away from the desk all of those things enable our system to slow down the blood flow, to slow down and move away from those emotional centers in our brain and allow us to apply logic rational reason, but we have to do active things to move us to that more logical place. You can't just have a battle of wills. You know, this person's really happy so I'm just going to get cool straight away.

[00:23:30] Or in this really difficult conversation, I'm suddenly going to be instantly confident. You have to take some active again, active steps to slow that system down so you can move into that

more rational mode and support and other people as a soundboard are critical in that. And we often don't use those enough.

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:23:49] So, so true. And I just, it's making me think about coming back to your point there about slowing the system down and being able to do that. And how much your concept of wanting to focus on the being rather than the having requires a bit of a slowdown or requires a bit of reflection. It requires a bit of thought.

[00:24:10] Yeah. Whether that's in the moment where you're feeling the emotions, or just generally when you're at that kind of neutral place, you still need more time to be able to do the being stuff because it takes thinking and you know, that side of things versus the having, I can go and have that if I do X, Y, Z, it's right. Action Focused versus reflection and how much, and I think one of the greatest reasonings. You could call it an excuse. You could call it a justification that I hear from people I work with is I don't have time to yeah. Yeah. And I'm really interested in our, I, I feel, and I might be completely wrong here that we have a very, casual relationship with time and our brains.

[00:24:57] And it's always focused on one thing and that's all about getting stuff done. And what we think about is the time right now versus the time invested for the future. And in my head, it takes way longer. To unravel a problem that you've created over a long period of time by doing things quickly than it does to stop and think now to then not create the problems in the future.

**Kate Goodger:** [00:25:19] Yeah, I would agree, , that that's my experience that, that people would say, oh, you haven't gotten to that and you just don't have enough time and you know, we are in a world of high demand and people are managing multiple roles, in, in that day, you know, whether they're a parent or carer, a professional, they want to have an active lifestyle around work.

[00:25:42] You know, you've got those competing demands. Time is always a price commodity, but I think you're accurate in that is it truly a reason or is it sometimes an excuse we make, so I think to pick up on a couple of things that you said, that around this work on the self and the being and having bit, I think.

[00:26:02] Like an athlete, if is going to be ready for competition, they have to consistently train to be able to maintain the level of fitness. They need to be able to, to be effective on, on the picture or in the pool. So there's a discipline and a regularity to doing that work. And we forget that our, our mind and our mental capability is the same. You have to routinely go to. Wherever your mental gym is whether that's going out and having a walk with dogs or whether it was having coffee with friends, but you have to do the work on that. You can't just suddenly expect to be cool as a cucumber in stressful situations. There's prep, that's needed.

[00:26:38] There's planning the actual execution of, of you know, what, whatever you've got to do in performance terms. And then there's the kind of debriefing and reviewing it. And I know that sounds very kind of analytical, but the simple practice is taking five minutes of intentional time each day to warm up your systems.

[00:26:55] So be ready for the day ahead. What are the potential triggers? What could be difficult in this day, set the expectations early and set them reasonably. And then it's five minutes at the end of



the day to reflect what worked, what didn't, what was lousy, what was joyful in my day? What was less enjoyable?

But it's, it's making those efforts. And so often in training sessions that you do with, with different clients is they w they want to solve a bullet. And there isn't one, it comes from a consistency and an intentionality on self. So if you are to move more into the balance of being happy, versus the having happiness then it involves that that considered time and that, that intentional work on cell phone on reflection and building that mental capacity for yourself. It's not just fairy dust stuff, it's it requires practice and consistency.

[00:27:51] **Beth Stallwood:** [00:27:51] So I'm really interested in this perspective, around the idea that people are looking for a silver bullet. And I find that all the time it's like, we want, we want the simplest easiest answer that we can do at once. And. It's there and it's done and therefore we will be happy, but that's just not how the world works. And it's certainly not how work works. It's certainly not how joy works. So yeah focusing, spending some time on being happy, spending some time on thinking about reflecting.

[00:28:21] I liked your advice of, you know, spend five minutes in the morning, thinking about setting yourself up for the day, reflect at the end of the day. And actually I'm sure we can all find 10 minutes a day. It's when think it's going to take loads more time than that. That it's almost impossible, but we can, like, we find 10 minutes a day to watch the telly don't we, or do something different.

[00:28:44] That seems more realistic.

**Kate Goodger:** [00:28:46] I think without Beth, because we, we, you know, we're into the pattern of, as a culture, you know, new year's resolutions that you have to have this big change in routine. And, and actually we set ourselves up to do these monumental changes in, and you said earlier that actually.

[00:29:02] The changes we're talking about. And these 10 minutes of reflections, we're talking about making a small intentional choice every day, but the, the difference in, I think in what we're emphasizing, it's not about the magnitude of change we're trying to encourage it's about the consistency of that. So if you just piloted for a week. What does it feel like to prep your day with five minutes while you're in the shower in the morning, just running through and people will say, oh, you always do that. Whenever the tendency is what we do is we prep the to-do list for the day. And that's not the same thing, cause the, to do list is everything's going to get done.

[00:29:36] Of course that's important. But even on your to-do list, are you highlighting the things that other than the do or die the top two or three things that need to be done because often this list is 30 items and then we feel like. You haven't accomplished things. So what are the top things that need to get done, but also what's your plan to do those things and what might disrupt you? What might get in the way that's the kind of planning we're talking about there. And then it's five minutes at the end of the day. It's not necessarily writing a big, long journal. It's not taking half an hour to reflect. It's not having to have a coach to reflect with every week when we make these things big and really effortful, then we're more likely to fall down.

[00:30:14] So there isn't a silver bullet, but there are small intentional changes and where you're seeing. Lifestyle coach now. And you're seeing the likes of Joe Wicks or some of these diet campaigns. You can see definite emphasis on less is more because if it's a big effort for change, it's so much harder to really make that a habit where if it's a small, intentional choice, it's done consistently.

[00:30:38] It's much easier for us to adopt that and really to engrain that as a habit.

[00:30:43] **Beth Stallwood:** Definitely and building habits is, you know, start it, try it, see if it works and then if it works for you, keep doing it, do it more. I'm interested now kind got onto the habit thing before we finish off today is to understand how can we notice when we're in habits that aren't helping us. So I kind of defer to find the terms as we have helpful habits. Like, you know, if you do do a bit of reflection in the evening, if you do prep your day, if you go for a walk at lunchtime and you always get, you know, your mental gym stuff in, but we also in our heads, and I know I have many of them have unhelpful habits and I think they're harder to break.

[00:31:24] The more you work with them. And the more you've had them the longer you've had them for. And I'd be really interested in your perspective on how can we notice and break and change some of those unhelpful habits.

**Kate Goodger:** [00:31:37] I think a useful starting point with our backs is identify what we might mean by habits.

[00:31:41] So there's kind of thinking habits, which can be things like beliefs, attitudes, biases, assumptions that we might make. And there are habits which are the kind of doing habits, you know, we have a tendency to repeat certain actions, so there are different. Types of habits, that we have. And sometimes it's the thinking thing.

[00:32:02] Sometimes it's a feeling habits, you know, we tend to get the same emotion around a particular person or a particular circumstance, or there's an action that we have. So it's worth differentiating the type of habits and, you know, a simple way of thinking about it is at the end of the day, you know, the things that went well and things that went less well, just tracking what those things are and practically tracking where might there be happy. A sort of simple way of thinking about your habits is, has this happened before. Is it familiar? Is this new territory, did it happen because it was in that moment or could it go actually, no, it tends to happen on a Thursday cause I'm shattered and I'm ready for the weekend.

[00:32:42] So it actually starts by tracking and just becoming aware and paying attention. And once you begin to isolate what habit might be, so it might be a certain thinking that you have about, let's say this at the stage of the week. We have this with athletes when we used to do fitness testing and we used to do it on a Saturday morning because it was at the end of the week.

[00:33:01] And it was a good way of signing off the week without just logically thinking. That's when they were most shattered on the Saturday. So what we did was actually shifted their testing to a Tuesday and we went for Tuesday because even Monday you're shaking off your weekend typically, and they, they function better perform better on a Tuesday.

[00:33:19] So just by tracking when your energy levels, for example, typically habitually, , lower during the week, you might then do target something by changing the type of work that you do on that day or how you go about doing the work. So tracking the habit helps you to isolate what is the habit that might be unhelpful and what type of habit is it?

[00:33:40] Is it an action based ones? Just as a highlighted with the athlete. Is it a feeling based one or is it a thinking based one often one of the things that people struggle most to pick out is the kind of thinking more based ones, you know, errors in thinking or unhelpful beliefs and the best example I would give and the one that I come across most commonly are expectations. And those expectations can be of self sort of have to be perfect. I can't say no. I can't fail. I mustn't raise these ideas up to the boss because you don't do these things up, but actually that, that may be a really purposeful conversation to help with some of these.

So there's expectations that we have of ourselves, which sometimes can be incredibly demanding and we generate our own stress and our own sources of that. And other times are particularly if we get an emotion like frustration or anger, a lot, those expectations then are often ones that we've imposed upon others.

[00:34:41] So I've, I've seen it with, couples kind of dating each other. And a few months back, I heard about a parent that was talking about their young professional daughter that had moved to London and she got this new boyfriend and this m was kind of horrified that this guy just ate pizza. Whereas the daughter was a complete health guru and really interested in that.

[00:35:03] And the mom's simple, common was all. Don't worry. She will change him. Yeah. It will take time, but posing our expectations on others. And then when other people don't hit our expectations. So we, again sit commonly where other people might always be late. You know, to meetings and we get frustrated, but that person has always been late to meetings or expectations of others that don't have the same level of detail that we have, expectations of others run of working hours.

You know, some people think it's okay to call it 9:00 PM at night, but did you set boundaries or that she wasn't the right time for you? So when we think about habits, it's about tracking you hitting pause again, reflecting on your day. What was the good stuff? The joyful stuff that I did and there's help for habits you want to continue to amplify maybe, what were some of the unhelpful ones start to isolate? What was the thinking? What was the feeling of what was the action? So the type of habits that we're looking at, and then how you might begin to change that. So if you have an expectation of X person is always going to be late, it's it recognizing that.

[00:36:12] And you have two choices. You can either get really, really frustrated with that person, or you can accept they are going to be late and then you work around that, but it's recognizing it's about the impact that it has on you. If it's not adding value to your life, not adding energy or bringing you joy, then don't hold onto it.

[00:36:32] You know, shift your perspective. Cause going back to some of our original conversation here, we talked about choice. So expectations for me is one of the most important thing from a habit perspective to try and help people to change, particularly when we're thinking that joy at work, because we set ourselves up to fail with inappropriate expectations every day.

[00:36:52] And we beat ourselves up about our expectations of self and others every day. Also.

**Beth Stallwood:** Yeah, so true. And I'm just sitting here thinking about the expectations we put on others. Like when somebody has the title of being your boss or your leader, we have an expectation of what they will be able to achieve and how they will do things.

[00:37:10] The example of the person who's always going to be late, you getting annoyed about it isn't going to change their behavior. No, but you getting annoyed about it. It's going to make you annoyed. The only person it's affecting is yourself. So it's, it's about recognizing that. And what you're saying is do something about that.

[00:37:26] Let it go change the way you think about it, understand it. And again, it all comes back to doesn't it a bit more reflection, a bit more hit pause. And I think just coming to it, I think we're going to call this episode, hit pause, because I think the feeling throughout it is. If you just take a few seconds or a couple of minutes every day to think about these things, it will help

[00:37:46] **Kate Goodger:** And without a doubt, it's, you know, it sounds like it can't be that simple and it's not necessarily that simple, but that's your starting point. I think that's what we, we're both trying to say here. It's not about these magnificent changes and suddenly I'm going to be reborn and truly joyful. Because life's tough stuff gets thrown at us work.

We have to fund a lot of our time doing stuff we don't necessarily want to do, but within that time, we can make intentional choices about how we want to be in that moment, how we want to be around others. And that, that is our responsibility. It's absolutely our responsibility. And if we want to have purpose, it's not about necessarily having the best job in the world that's a calling for you, but how you might go about doing that. So your joy might be your treatment of others, how you engage with them because you can look yourself in the mirror at night or put your head on the pillow when you go to sleep now and you had a good day, cause she lived your life in the way that you wanted to.

So that I know sounds really philosophical, but actually we overcomplicate it. I put loads of stuff in there. Sit down, you know, recognize what, what matters to you and then make those choices to live a life in that way. But it does involve practice and you will fail. You will screw up and you'll have bad days but equally there are those good days.

[00:39:01] And it's the balance of those two that I think brings us richness and you can rent true joy out of really tough circumstances.

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:39:09] And I do also think that when you say, you know, you will fail, you will get things wrong, you will, and being able to deal with that as important. But also I think every time you fail, you have learned something about what you can do next. You've done something about what didn't work, what did work, how you can make it happen. If you take the time again to hit the pause button, reflect on actually, why didn't that work? Did it not work because I didn't put enough energy into it. Did it not work because my expectations were too high. We can really think about it and hitting pause, having a, you know, I always think the answers are already out there.

[00:39:40] I can't remember the amount of times that someone's recommended, you know, you just take 10 deep breaths and actually that does work. Doesn't it. And it's, it's old school as I'm sure it's

like something that my grandmother would have said to me, take a few deep breaths, but that is actually sometimes the best thing you can possibly do the simplest thing

**Kate Goodger:** [00:39:58] And atomically. You are changing or not, not anatomically physiologically. You are changing the way the system is operating by slowing it down. Now that the hormones that are released in that rush and you're dealing with all of those things, I think by slowing down helps them to dissipate. It helped kind of shift blood flow to help to reregulate and kick in our nervous system in the way that we wanted to.

[00:40:21] So it's not just a theoretical thing. There's good evidence behind it, but it, again, it's the intentionality of doing that that the only part I was going to add, Beth, I think it's important and. Just something that I find continually challenging is, is where people don't give themselves permission to have joy to, and particularly in the athlete world, it's like, if you're not suffering enough, you're not training hard enough.

[00:40:48] And there's a one particular sport. I won't name it. But the, the mindset in that sport is if you're not on the edge of being injured or close, then you're absolutely not training hard enough. No, we would have to do overnight watches where you had an athlete that had maybe a stress fracture. Yeah. And they would try and go out of their room at 3:00 AM to do a run or to do a training session because they were worried about missing out, you know, that those people Their obsession has gone to the point that the joy has run out of it. And it, again, it will be if I deliver this medal that I can be joyful out of. And so I think there's also some people in internal crisis that actually, they, they are not worthy of, of joy or they're not worthy as an individual. So that really goes back to that idea of being.

[00:41:33] And for them to look at themselves, what, what matters what's important? Where do they see their value coming from? Who really matters to them in the world truly matters. Those people, you would turn up on their doorstep in the middle of the night, because they truly, truly care about you versus trying to keep a whole bunch of other people happy.

[00:41:52] So I just wanted to add that, that last part in, I think habit to get into is that you are worthy of joy and everyone should have joy. I've seen moderation. Don't get crazy with it, but the basis is part of, one of the fundamentals to our health and wellbeing. It feeds that positive emotions. And if we're not doing that for ourselves, and it's very hard for it to us to contribute to others, if we're not doing that.

**Beth Stallwood:** Yeah, and I totally agree. And it's making me also reflect on over the past, you know, nine months with the COVID situation, with where people are at right now. I do feel a lot of people holding back their joy when they feel it, because they see so much challenge and struggle and strife in other people, it's almost like they don't want to experience any joy themselves.

So there's some times we limit our own joy because we don't want other people to. Feel bad. You've kind of got it worse than us or, and it's, they actually. You experiencing joy doesn't mean that somebody else, , is you're you're not, , empathetic to their situation. You still can be, but you can [00:43:00] also experience joy and use that joy to help you and maybe help other people.

[00:43:03] And, but it's very hard to help other people have joy or develop things when you don't have it or understand it yourself. Hmm.

**Kate Goodger:** [00:43:10] And you're more fundamental than that. I think some people, how have you heard the world? If everybody else is okay, then I'll take care of myself. And so they, they will compromise health they'll.

[00:43:22] They will compromise decisions around lifestyle decisions to spend key time with them. With members of family, et cetera, because they're, they're trying to contribute to others and make sure others are, are okay. And although that's noble thing over time, we become depleted and our resources become depleted.

[00:43:38] And then we can edge into resentment or frustration or those things, but it came back to us, really not taking care of ourselves. You know, the first rule of first aid is don't become, you know, another. Patient casualty check the circumstance. So there's intentionality around feeding and nourishing our system with joy just to keep it healthy.

[00:43:58] So it's not going crazy, but it's keeping it healthy means that we have much more resource and internal energy to give to others. So I think too often we are compromising ourselves thinking we're doing long-term good, but actually we end up suffering. And as a consequence, we ended up not in a great place in camp of what others.

[00:44:18] So it's not just a hopeful thing. I believe it's a fundamental thing to people's wellbeing these days.

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:44:26] Okay. It's been amazing talking to you. And I think we could probably talk for hours, but I'm not sure everyone would want to listen to us for another four or five hours. So I'm going to move on if you don't mind to some quickfire questions before we finish off, right question one is for you personally, what is always guaranteed to bring you some work joy.

**Kate Goodger:** [00:44:46] Ooh, problems and problem solving. Yeah, I think that gives me great joy is being able to get to the root of a problem. So I have an immense curiosity, and problem solving definitely lights up my day.

[00:45:01] **Beth Stallwood:** [00:45:01] Brilliant. Question two. What book are you currently reading?

[00:45:08] **Kate Goodger:** I think it's called, How Emotions Are Made by Lisa Friedman.

It's a different view on, we have this idea of each having a specific types of emotions, like anger looks like this sadness looks like that. And she has a different view. That's called the classical view of emotions. This is one called the constructionist view. So it's completely different turning everything on its head in terms of where emotions come from and then not kind of predetermined, but there's something that you curate internally as a totally different perspective. And it's blowing my brain.

[00:45:46] **Beth Stallwood:** [It sounds amazing. I think that's going to get on my order list. Thank you for that one. Question three is in your life, what is the best or most useful piece of advice that someone's given to you that you always find yourself coming back to?

**Kate Goodger:** [00:46:00] You can only ever do your best.

[00:46:03] , that was my mentor, Steve Peters and that the reasons that's so important, it can sound like a really simple statement and obvious statement. But too often, we again goes back to the expectation part that we have unrealistic expectations that we have to be the best or every time we go out and before we have to do our best, but the emphasis on, on doing the best you can.

[00:46:26] Under the circumstances is, is do what you can do and try and best influence, but recognize things won't necessarily be perfect. You won't always get it right. But can you again, look yourself in the mirror knowing you get the best of yourself in that moment? The majority of us can answer yes to that. It doesn't mean that the next day can't be better, but it was been a huge thing that stops me, beating myself up. But also something that I see in clients when they really get that. And they really value that statement, actually, anxiety, fear, concern begins to dissipate because you know, if you've gone out and [00:47:00] done your best, then you've done your best.

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:47:02] Such great advice and you're right. It stops us focusing on the best in a league table or the best compared to other people and getting that comparative Titus disease where you're constantly comparing yourself to others.

[00:47:14] And actually just focusing on, did I do my best today? Yeah, I did. And I'm pleased. And I'm proud about that at all. No, I didn't. Why didn't I, what was going on and what can I do about that? It's actually more useful, isn't it? Yes. Yeah, definitely. Okay, final, quickfire question is what super practical, better advice would you give our listeners that they could take away and do right now to help them build or cultivate or create some work joy in their life?

**Kate Goodger:** [00:47:44] Hm, I'm caught between two. Okay. I think the emphasis on the word choice, and knowing that, that you have that. So I think paying attention to the possible choices that you have from being able to. To separate those out gives you a chance to move to that plan or that activity that we talked about earlier.

I think the, the second is to slow that system down. We talked about pause a lot in this conversation, but that can be incredibly helpful just by slowing things down. Step away from the desk, take a walk. Take a breath and give yourself a chance to actually fully process sometimes we need to process in the moment, but often times we don't need to.

[00:48:25] Part of us tells we have to give an instant answer to the boss, but actually saying, can I check that detail and come back to you later in the day, most people would go, okay. Yeah. So yeah, just slowing the system down.

**Beth Stallwood:** [00:48:37] Amazing. And finally, where can people find out more about you, your work and what you do?

[00:48:44] , Hmm. I would say, certainly go to my linked in profile or via the moving ahead. Website. That's probably the best place

[00:48:58] **Beth Stallwood:** Thank you so much for joining us today on the work it's been fantastic to have a conversation with you and have a great day.

[00:49:08] **Kate Goodger:** [00:49:08] You too. Thanks Beth. For the company.

[00:49:13] **Beth Stallwood:** [00:49:13] Thank you for listening to that episode with Dr. Kate Goodger. I have to say I'm keeping coming back to this one theme from the sessions today, and that was around this idea of hitting pause, giving ourselves even a few seconds to think before we act to understand where we're coming from.

[00:49:32] What our own behaviors are. I also am really reflecting on this idea of the difference between having joy and living with joy. So the version that you can buy joy, that you can get it, you can find it versus actually just being happy and that's one thing I'm going to take away and think about a little bit more about how does that work in my life.

[00:49:57] I hope you enjoyed the episode. We would love to hear what you think, taking from it. We'd love you to go and listen to some of the other episodes, anything that might inspire you from them. You can connect with us on LinkedIn and on Instagram to create work joy. And please do tag us in some of the actions you're taking.

[00:50:14] Tell us what's going on for you and let us know if there's anyone else that you would like us to interview in us the second season of the work joy jam. Thank you and have a great day.