Transcript for Celeste Headlee | We Need to Talk (Episode 684)

Full show notes found here:
https://theartofcharm.com/podcast-episodes/celeste-headlee-we-need-to-talk-episode-684/

CELESTE: We have used our hive mind in order to dominate the planet, and that requires empathy for one another, the desire to see someone else as another human being with their own thoughts and perspectives, worthy of your help.

JORDAN: Welcome to The Art of Charm. I'm Jordan Harbinger and I'm here with producer Jason DeFillippo. On this episode we'll be talking with Celeste Headlee. Celeste is the host of On Second Thought at Georgia Public Broadcasting in Atlanta and she's been a host and correspondent for NPR and PRI since 2006. She's the author of *We Need to Talk: How to Have Conversations that Matter*. Jason and I loved this book. It's right up our alley, there's lots of research on social science, psychology and neuroscience, as applied to conversations and human interaction, as experienced by someone who's been doing interviews for almost a decade longer than I have.

Today, we'll outline some strategies that will make you a better conversationalist and dive into actionable steps that you can take to improve your communication skills. We'll also discuss why listening in the right way is actually the key to improving what you have to say, as well as explore how we can put our cognitive bias in check and have productive disagreements, and even why your phone might be damaging your relationships with other people, even when it's off.

As usual, we have a worksheet for today's episode so you can make sure you solidify your understanding of the key takeaways here from Celeste Headlee. That link is in the show notes at theartofcharm.com/podcast. Now, enjoy this episode with Celeste Headlee.

I still think there's a large crowd of very educated people like those that listen to you on NPR or us here that want long format

discussions where people have done their homework, and -- have you found that? Because you actually went over the research on attention span and it was like, “Oh, my gosh, I need to do 12 second podcasts, now.”

CELESTE: I know, right? Yes, our attention spans are getting shorter. Now, to be fair, the places in which it’s the worst is when we’re on the Internet. That’s where our attention spans are eight seconds at a time, which is one second shorter than that of a goldfish.

I have found that people are willing to listen to a longer interview when it’s packed with actually good information, not extreme statements, not things that are supposed to play on your own confirmation bias and your emotions, but things that actually teach you something new. And the other thing about that is that when you’re a really skilled interviewer, you can get a lot into a short period of time because you’re not wasting time repeating things, you’re not asking questions that that person has been asked a million times, you’re not wasting time, you’re getting straight to the meat of what it is that you want to talk about, just like you just did. So, you can actually be very efficient and still have a great interview and people are here for that.

NPR is at a record number of listeners and that’s on terrestrial radio. As much as podcasting is growing as it is, terrestrial radio is still king and NPR has more listeners right now than ever before, and there’s something to be said for that.

JORDAN: That’s surprising. I did not know that. It’s not surprising because I think the quality is lower, but it’s surprising because everything we hear is that it’s the dumb, sort of lowest common denominator that is getting all the attention, which is why we see -- sorry Buzzfeed -- but Buzzfeed, where it’s like, “Hey, let’s not even do articles anymore, we’ll just do a list, but instead of words we’re going to have a picture of a celebrity rolling their eyes or blowing a kiss and we’re going to make that the top 10.” And I just thought, “Wow, we aren’t even going to be able to

speak English anymore." And, to hear that NPR is actually growing, it's a huge relief.

CELESTE: I'm glad to hear that and it is growing and it has been growing steadily. After 9/11 NPR got a gigantic boost in listeners and we didn't lost it. And in fact, in the lead up to the 2016 election and since the election occurred, NPR's listenership has been growing steadily as well. Now, NPR is also dominating the podcast field, but the terrestrial radio signal dwarfs podcasting and record highs. So, there's flash in the pan and then there's stuff that people don't feel the need to wear t-shirts or maybe our listeners aren't the loudest, maybe that's what it's about. Maybe they're not the ones sending explosive comments on Twitter to Facebook, so maybe they're just quieter, so they make less of a splash. But, they're out there and they're in the millions.

JORDAN: So, you've researched a ton throughout your career here at NPR. You've been with NPR for what, over a decade now.

CELESTE: Oh, like 18 or 19 years, yeah.

JORDAN: Oh, my gosh. All right, so you have had the interviewing chops for multiple decades here. I assume you didn't just jump into NPR and they're like, "Wow, you're so naturally good at this. Let's keep you here," were you? Or did you have to develop this over time?

CELESTE: Actually, that's literally what happened.

JORDAN: Really?

CELESTE: Yeah.

JORDAN: Well then, what the heck are you doing here? How are you going to teach us if it's all talent?

CELESTE: It is not all talent. I mean, what happened was, I am a professional opera singer and so my first job in radio was as a

classical music host but it turned out they didn't really have anyone qualified to do cultural interviews and so they started training me to do those, to interview the musicians and the novelists, etc. And I had a natural affinity for it so they kept going. And so then they trained me how to report and then they trained me how to host a local show of All Things Considered. It wasn't all talent. I mean, I'd gone to every single fellowship I could, I tell everyone I know, "Never turn down free training." I had years of training with David Candow who is a man that NPR refers to as The Host Whisperer, and fellowships and Getty Fellowships and stuff like that.

So now, years later, I'm highly trained. But when I first got into it, it was because I had a musician's ear that it wasn't necessarily better questions I was asking -- I don't think, in the very beginning -- it was that I was listening better than most people did, and I think that's sort of what boosted me above.

JORDAN: So, after developing all of these particular skills over time, what prompted you to then write a book and think, "I should teach this to other people?" I mean, were you taking your hosting skills and applying them to regular life interactions and thinking, "Gee, how come more people don't understand these?"

CELESTE: For me, it was more like an epiphany in realizing that the skills that I was learning that would make me a better interviewer, worked equally as well outside. And that really came about because as I was researching, "How to have better conversations," because at heart, that's what interview is, right? It's the best conversation. I found a lot of advice. Over 90 percent of the advice was just useless and when I say that, what I mean is I would try that stuff out.

I host a radio show five days a week, which means I'm literally having conversations with dozens of people from all different jobs and walks of life and demographic and income, etcetera, etcetera, and I can take a piece of advice like, "Nod your head to show that you're paying attention," and I can try that out for several weeks in my little laboratory and I could see if it makes

a difference. And what I found was all that advice that we've been getting for years: maintaining eye contact, repeating back what you just heard, etcetera, etcetera, was crap. It does not work. Therefore, I had to start thinking to myself, "Boy, did any of these people actually use this advice? And if they did, were they actually paying attention to the effect it had on the conversation over all or on the person they were talking to?"

So, I ended up having to start from scratch for myself to get stuff that worked. And I had to venture into fields and sciences that maybe hadn't been looked at before in relation to conversation. And so I ended up finding all this research and this knowledge from neurological fields and from sociological fields, even teaching English as a Second Language, there's some really valuable research there. And I started compiling a set of things that actually worked, that I could test out in my professional field, and see that they really did work and make a difference.

And then the big epiphany, of course, was that when I tried this at home with my kid or my friend or my next door neighbor, they worked just as well. And so it turned out there was just a simple standard. There was a standard for a good conversation that worked in almost any atmosphere.

JORDAN: What type of advice did you have in the beginning that was bad that you think most people are still applying? Obviously, "Maintain eye contact," that's one that you hear all the time, regardless of whether you're a broadcaster or just -- you're teaching a child how to listen better. It's always, "Look them in the eye and maintain eye contact." And then, I'll get things in my inbox like, "I've been maintaining really good eye contact with people but I think it's creepy and I don't really know where the line is," and I'm thinking, "Oh, I'm sure it's fine," then you meet them and you're like, "Uh-oh, is this person going to follow me home?"

CELESTE: Right.

JORDAN: “What’s happening here?”

CELESTE: Yeah, it’s terrible. You know, the biggest problem with a lot of the advice that we’ve gotten is it’s teaching you how to pretend you’re paying attention. If you’re focused on maintaining eye contact, then you’re not focusing on what they’re saying. If you’re focusing on nodding every so often, you’re not focused on what you’re saying. And what I discovered is that if you actually instead learn how to pay attention, which is hard, it is not simple, but if you can learn how to focus on what someone else is saying and actually be an engaged listener, all those other things occur naturally. You don’t have to worry about the movements your body is making -- you know, mirroring someone else’s body movements. No. No, no, no, no, no. That takes too much of your attention span to focus on that when all of your attention should be on what the other person is saying. And that’s the problem with all of that advice, it’s asking you to sort of become an actor, or a mime, maybe? But, it’s not teaching you how to be engaged in the conversation.

JORDAN: This makes sense. This goes in line with some of the things we teach at our school and during our programs and products here, which is, we have something called the Doorway Drill, which I’ve taught a billion times. But essentially, the idea is people will ask for, “How do I make a good first impression?”

And so, we know that that happens nonverbally and so we say things like, “Chin up, chest up, shoulders back, smile on your face,” and instead of practicing this, people will take that and go walk into a mixer or walk into a meeting and they’re so concerned with maintaining good body language, proper posture, good eye contact, that their internal dialogue is, “Chin up, oops. Have your back straight. Oh, look him in the eye. Firm hand shake. Smiling. Are you still smiling?” and then after a few minutes you go, “Oh, ****, I have no idea what they’re talking about because I’ve missed a good 30 seconds of dialogue trying to make sure I look like I’m present instead of actually being present.”

CELESTE: What makes it even worse is we already tend to not pay attention anyway. One of the things I point to in the book is they did this massive study on how much space people leave between person finishing a sentence and another person responding. And when I say massive, I mean worldwide. Every continent. They studied tons and tons of different places and they found that on average, human beings leave less than a half a second of space, which means there is no way you have heard what the other person said, thought about it, and then come up with a response.

That means, almost all the time, we are not listening to what the other person is saying, we're catching maybe the first 10 or 15 seconds, and then we spend our time thinking about what we're going to say next. We wait for them to start talking and then we insert our response. That's our tendency anyway. So, if you add into that this whole thing of, "Oh, say, 'Uh-huh.' Oh, look at them straight in the eye. Okay, nod now. Laugh, hahaha," then you're literally not hearing a damn word they say.

JORDAN: Now I feel like I have to pause before responding or I haven't been paying attention. There's going to be more dead air in the rest of this episode because I have to pause after each sentence. No, well what I can do is just say, "Hey, Jason, cut out all the pauses where I was definitely hearing everything that Celeste said so that we have less dead air." Now I don't have to pause at all. It's going to just sound like I did. All right. No, that makes a lot of sense because I understand that when I'm broadcasting, for example, it's hot potato. I don't know if you get this feeling but I feel like, "Uh-oh, I better be talking if you're not talking in order to keep the conversation going."

That's really not that much different than what I think people who are not in front of microphones say is, "Awkward silence." "Uh-oh, she stopped talking and we're on a date, so I better say something," and you end up with that whole, "I like turtles," phenomenon, right where the first thing just comes out of your mouth. It doesn't matter what it is as long as there's no silence

and you might have to actually be alone with that person with no dialogue for a second.

CELESTE: Yeah, you know it's interesting, I just had a conversation like this today. You know, I get my eyebrows threaded because I'm ethnic and I've been going to the same woman, a persian woman, for years now. And we have your typical conversation, "How are you doing? You've been busy? Oh, that's great. Blah, blah, blah, blah." But today, I said, "You guys were away, what happened?" she said, "We had to fly to Iran really quickly," and I said, "Well, that was a quick trip. What happened?" and she explained that her mother in law had died and then she said, "It's been a tough year. My mother died and my son died," and I said, "I'm so sorry," and nothing else. Because in my head I'm sitting there thinking, "There is nothing I can say right now. She lost her 28 year old son and mother and mother in law."

JORDAN: That's terrible.

CELESTE: And so here's the thing, I know that oftentimes people rush to fill that silence, especially in a case like this where you could see someone struggling, but I held my tongue, I said nothing, she said nothing, she continued to work on my eyebrows. As I'm checking out, I said, "I just wanted to repeat again, I can't even imagine what this year has been like for you. So sorry," and then she again said nothing, we then had another what you called awkward -- but actually, it was perfectly welcoming and warm silence for 30 seconds and then she just opened up and I was there for the next 15 minutes and we both started crying.

And she's telling me what her son was like and I asked her, "What kind of things did he like to do, what kind of man was he?" And she started balling and she said, "Thank you so much, I have to smile all the time for my daughter because I don't want her to be sad." So she said, "I just -- I'm sorry to cry, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah." But it just turned into this really moving conversation and I barely said anything. And sometimes you don't have to say anything. Sometimes that's the best thing you can say.

JORDAN: That's hard for a lot of folks because -- not just the awkwardness, if that's even the right word, but I think when we get nervous, we rush to fill that silence. I mean, the dialogue in my own head -- and I'll just speak for myself -- is, "Huh, well, I don't want them to think that I think that they're making this awkward so I'm going to act like nothing happened, but then that would be weird because it'll seem like I don't care. So, I'm just going to start talking and hopefully in the middle of this sentence I'll figure out what I'm trying to say. Oh, my God, I'm being so weird right now."

CELESTE: Yeah, and the thing is is that that's literally true because most people's average speed of speech is maybe 150 words per minute but we think at 400 to 450 words per minute, that's how we can top out at. You're not going to be able to stop that. You can't ever stop your brain from -- constantly like a hamster on a wheel -- thinking all those words. No matter how hard you're paying attention, I want to be clear about that. It's like, you know, people tell you, "Clear your mind." That's not going to happen. That's impossible to do.

Sometimes we make the mistake of actually verbalizing all of that crap that's going through our heads all the time and it's a mistake because that's not the purpose of that running dialogue in your head. Your brain is constantly thinking and processing and finding context and that's for you. That's for you to understand what's happening, understand what you're hearing, put it into context, file it away in the right file folders in your brain, and create a greater understanding. That's not necessarily helpful to the conversation.

JORDAN: That's interesting. I hadn't really thought about that but of course you're right. That context is there, it doesn't have to come out. It's not a computer read out on the display. It doesn't all have to be displayed there for all parties. And that's right, we do think much faster. In fact, we had a guest recently, Isaac Lidsky, he lost his sight as an adult and he had clerked for the supreme court and was blind and one of my questions was, "Oh,

my gosh, when I was in law school I could barely read all that stuff, I'm a slow reader, how did you do it?" And he said, "Actually, it's a huge advantage," because he can listen to audio at something like 7x 380 or 350 words per minute and I just immediately had never been so jealous of somebody in my life because I thought, "Oh, my gosh, you can read War and Peace in five percent of the time that I could."

His brain was just a steel trap, I mean, he was amazing with this stuff. But of course, you can't talk at 380 or 350 words per minute and you shouldn't try. Because now you're just flooding the conversational landscape and it doesn't make any sense. But, I think a lot of us, we struggle with that when we don't know what else to do. We don't necessarily know how to listen that well and one of the things in *We Need to Talk* that really struck me at first was that changing how you listen will actually improve what you have to say. Can you discuss that concept?

CELESTE: Changing the way you listen is the only way you're going to learn. To quote Larry King, "I will not learn anything from what I say today, I can only learn by listening." So, anything you say, you already know. I mean, Buddha even said it. "If your mouth is open, you're not learning." There are so many variations on that particular phrase, I could spend the rest of the time just quoting them.

The fact of the matter is that number one, by listening to someone else, you are going to hear things that you didn't know and didn't expect. But in order to do that, you have to stop assuming that you know what someone else is going to say and that's difficult because we constantly hear the first 10 words of a sentence and assume we know where the rest of that sentence is going, and that's part of the reason we stop listening and start already thinking we can get our response together because we know what they're going to say. It's also probably why research shows that older people are worse listeners than millennials. Younger people are better listeners and I have to wonder if that's because they're less prone to

assume they know already what you're saying and what you think.

So, when you're listening to someone else, the human body is just miraculously designed by biology and evolution to read another human voice and face. We don't even understand how it all works, that's how sophisticated and in some ways mysterious it is. For example, this work that's coming out of Princeton in which they had someone tell a personal story about their life. In one case she was talking about a disastrous prom and they had her hooked up to a FMRI, a Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging machine, and then they had people listen to her in a very engaged way and they were all hooked up to FMRIs and they discovered something that is as close to magic as science can get. When someone was listening in an engaged way to someone else tell a personal story, the brain waves of both the speaker and the listeners moved in sync. They began to exactly mirror one another and in some cases the sync was so precise that the listener's brain waves would anticipate changes in the speaker by a fraction of a second. That's mind meld.

JORDAN: Yeah, that's amazing in a way that sounds like science fiction.

CELESTE: Right? It sounds like it would be happening to Captain Kirk but it's true, it's provable, you can replicate it, and we have no idea how it works frankly, or why. Except that we know that the one thing, the one thing human beings do better than any other species is communicate with one another and on a level that we don't even at this point scientifically understand, and that's what we are constantly replacing with email and emojis. Why would we do that?

JORDAN: What do you have against emojis?

CELESTE: Did you want me to answer that? You're terrible.

JORDAN: No, I mean, you could. I was like, "Nah, I don't want to just talk over your answer if you do," but yeah, no, you don't have to

answer that. That's one of those questions that does actually answer itself. I didn't come here to waste your time with that. I came here to waste your time with other things.

CELESTE: My answer is poop emoji.

JORDAN: One of everyone's favorites, I would imagine.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

JORDAN: So, how can we then change the way that we listen, other than saying, "Okay, be more engaged?" You even mentioned during the study they had people listen in a way that was engaged. What does that mean, specifically?

CELESTE: So, what it means, in order to listen to someone in an engaged way, you are understanding not just the supertext but the subtext, right? So, you're asking people to listen to a way where they not only get the vocabulary, the words that are chosen, and the basics of a story -- the beginning, middle, and the end -- but they're listening for the underlying meaning and they're listening for the underlying emotion. And you can do that when you're listening in a conversation, also. That's one thing you can focus yourself on. "What are they really saying? What are my questions? Did I understand what I just heard? Wait, slow down a second." And this is what happens to me often in interviews because I'm listening in a more engaged way and I'm trying to hear the deeper meaning, I will often say, "Wait, sorry, I need to stop you right there. Did you just say, 'Blah, blah, blah, blah blah?'" Those questions naturally arise when you're really listening to someone.

Another thing that has to happen is you have to learn how to let thoughts come into your mind and go out, right? That's the secret. As I mentioned, you can't stop your brain from thinking all those thoughts and words, but what you can learn to do is let them come in and let them go out without focusing on those, without losing your focus, but return that focus to the person who's speaking.

Now, the only way we have at this point, that I know of and that I've seen any actual research on, is by studying mindfulness meditation. That's the only way we know right now to learn how to do that. But it's very effective at doing that. It is training your brain to not hold onto those thoughts, to let them do what they're supposed to do, give you background information, give you context, and then flow right out the other ear and return your attention to the other person. That's listening in an engaged way.

JORDAN: Well, if you told me meditation would make me a better interviewer, I would have been doing it the entire time. But otherwise it's so hard to sit still, so I do constantly struggle with that. But I think you're right, we don't really necessarily need a fancy app or music or anything like that to do this. It is much easier than people thing. There's just there's cottage industry of making sure that meditation is hard so that you need a product to do it and the person who invented that product can make some dough.

I love the idea of letting thoughts go through your head -- in and out, I guess, is the way you phrased it -- because for me, a long time, many years of doing this show, whenever people say, "Hey, where are the first 200 episodes?" and me and Jason say, "Please don't look for those," is because I didn't do anything of the sort, right? It was just -- if I had a thought, I had to hold it, write it down, and then as soon as I found a break in conversation, I would say 10 or 20 things, half the time three whiskeys in. You can imagine what a show like that would sound like. Thank God, early days of podcasting nobody cared. It was just free audio at that time. The bar, thankfully, is a little higher for us now.

But, I think a lot of us in conversation are not only doing everything you just mentioned, which is thinking about what our response might be after the first 10 seconds, but we have already, in many cases, decided on that. And so our brains -- in search of efficiency, I suppose -- decide to stop listening. And you, I know, have been in interviews like this and if not, you will

during your book tour here, and I know I have done hundreds of podcasts interviews, many of them -- they go a little something like this. I say the first few words of a sentence, the host finishes it but is wrong, so I have to correct them, and while I'm correcting them, they try to finish my sentence again, but they're wrong, so I have to correct them, and I get one or two concrete points in the first 20 minutes of the show because everything is a tangent.

CELESTE: Yeah, it's terrible. I'm not going to mention who those people were, one of them happened fairly recently, but it happens all the time. And it's not just the interviewer, the hapless interviewer, right? It happens in our daily life all the time and frankly I've heard this lead to spousal arguments.

I mean, that assuming you know what someone's going to say -- and we have this illusion of intimacy, right, where we think we know our closest friends and family members better than we do and when we actually get that into a laboratory setting, it turns out those assumptions we make about how well we know our friends and loved ones, are wrong. We're not right and in fact a lot of that communication with the people that we think know us best is worse and more inaccurate than the communication we have with perfect strangers. And it's for this very reason that you're outlining that you assume you know what someone is saying.

Obviously this happens in email. They did a study recently in which they found that your closest friends and family members are no better at detecting sarcasm in your email, for example, than a complete stranger off the street. We're not communicating as well as we think we are. We are not relating accurate messages, people are not hearing what we actually said.

JORDAN: That dovetails really well with what you mention, as well in the book on bias, right? So, this isn't directly cognitive bias or perhaps it is a different kind of cognitive bias where we always assume that we know what's going to happen. But, bias creeps

into our speech and our thought processes and certainly in our conversations, and you write about that a lot in the book. Would you tell us how bias affects what we do? And of course it's usually negative, I would imagine. It seems like something that has infected everything from politics and unfortunately even in the conversations that we have with our friends and family every day.

CELESTE: Right, so you're at the dog park and somebody walks up to you and they're wearing a Make America Great Again hat. You are probably going to assume you know what that person's opinions are and you'd be wrong about that. I guarantee you would not be correct.

We make these assumptions all the time. You see a white guy with dreads, you make assumptions. You see a girl that looks like a sorority sister wearing a Victoria's Secret Pink sweatpants with a back tattoo, you're going to make assumptions about who she is, what she likes, what she doesn't like. Some of that is fair because we choose the things that we drive, we choose the things we wear, in order to say something about our identity.

But, in terms of our inner lives, our inner thoughts, our opinions, the nooks and crannies of who we are, you can't know that from my t-shirt or my sneakers. Those biases interfere with conversation because, as I said before, we're making assumptions about someone else and we don't hear them either. We stop really listening to them because we think we know. It comes in in another way which is that we then feel a need to change their mind, often.

And the attempt to change someone's mind is the death of good conversation because basically you're changing the power dynamic. You're putting yourself at a higher level than that other person. You're putting yourself at the level of lecturer or teacher or professor and you're going to teach them where they're wrong and show them how you're right and therefore change their mind, and that is not a good conversation. A good

conversation is turn-taking and mutual respect and shared space. If you want to create a debate then go join a debate club. A debate is not a conversation and that's one of the problems with bias, it prevents us from really seeing someone else as a nuanced, complicated individual who's had life experiences that can be instructional and educational and enlightening to us, even if there are some of their opinions that we don't agree with.

JORDAN: And of course, humans are hardwired to have this bias because it keeps us alive in many cases, it's efficient for many things, but of course the tradeoff is that we miss the other, I don't know, 40, 70, whatever percent of information, like you said, "The nooks and crannies," because usually that stuff wouldn't necessarily matter for survival. So, it's safer for us to say, "That person is a scary threat," than to say, "Well this person must have interesting life experience that could be really interesting, but I'm not going to ask that because they have a face tattoo and for me that means that they're dangerous, they've been to prison, and that they're a bad person and they grew up poor."

CELESTE: Right, and look, in a way you can use that information about evolution to increase empathy. And by that I mean, look, you are absolutely correct, this need to categorize people is a survival instinct because if someone's running at you -- if you're a primitive person and somebody is running at you through the forest, you have to make some pretty quick determinations whether they're a danger or not, whether you need to run or fight, but that doesn't help you in conversation. I'm hoping that when someone says, "Hello," to you in the grocery store line, you're not choosing whether to run or fight, I really, really hope.

But, you can use it to establish empathy because here's the thing, we are attuned to make assumptions about people, everyone is. And that means every one of us is biased in some way that we are unaware of. In fact, the research has even said being aware of your own bias doesn't help you counteract it. So, when you hear someone say something and you say, "Oh,

they're biased," that's a moment for you to go, "You know what? They are biased and so am I. Yeah."

JORDAN: That deserves highlighting. Just being aware of your own bias does not mitigate it.

CELESTE: Correct. In fact, we aren't entirely sure how -- what is the best, most efficient way to counteract bias, except increasing empathy is one of the only ways we have found that breaks down bias. Now remember, empathy is quite different from compassion or sympathy. Sympathy is, "I feel sorry for you," empathy is, "I feel with you," and it's not just something that you are listening to in your soft skills course that you hate at work or in kindergarten or whatever.

Empathy is just like bias, a survival skill, because human beings need each other in order to survive. We are not good in a one on one fight with almost any beast in the field, or the sea for that matter. But what we do do really well is collaborate and cooperate.

We have used our hive mind in order to dominate the planet and that requires empathy for one another. The desire to see someone else as another human being with their own thoughts and perspectives worthy of your help or worthy of asking for help, right? When you have empathy for another person, you are seeing them as another human being worthy of respect, and that means that you will actually listen to them that way. If you have no empathy for someone, you will not listen to them, it doesn't matter how compelling their argument is, you will not heed it, and that's where we are right now.

You know, the University of Michigan did a survey of 72 different studies undertaken in the United States and found that empathy has dropped by some measures, by 40 percent over the past 30 years and most of that has occurred since the year 2000. That's dangerous. When we're talking about a quality that actually has helped the human species survive on the planet and we're losing it by double digits, that is a dangerous

place to be. And so, if we can do anything to counteract bias, it is by increasing empathy. In fact, the confirmed stories that we have of people who have been able to say, convince someone to leave the KKK, those were all because someone listened to them. Someone showed them that empathy of listening and being a witness instead of a judge.

JORDAN: Okay, so I of course agree that empathy is important. It's scary to look at studies that say it's decreased by 40 percent in some measures, even though there maybe callback unintended here, there could be bias in those kinds of studies, as well. How do we increase empathy? Because I guarantee you you could get David Duke on the phone or some other unsavory character and he'd go, "You know, I'm pretty empathetic myself," and we're all thinking, "Are you kidding?" I mean, everyone thinks, "Well, you know, I'm empathetic. I do really well with this." There's very few people that are going to admit to a shortcoming in this area, even if they are aware of it, which most people wouldn't be.

CELESTE: There's actually a great work in how we can increase empathy, and the good news is you can. It's not like you're born with a certain amount of empathy and that's it, you're either a sociopath or Mr. Rogers. There's a lot of different things. Actually, reading novels can increase your empathy, playing in a band or singing in a choir can increase your empathy, spending time volunteering and working for someone else, any of those things that sort of take you out of yourself and focusing on your own concerns can increase empathy.

But, the number one way, and this comes out of excellent research from the University of Berkeley Greater Good Center -- the number one way is to listen to someone else's perspectives and life experience. Number one most effective way to increase your empathy and it's really simple. You just have to shut up and listen to someone else tell their story, even if you don't agree with it, even if they are David Duke. I guarantee you I could learn something from David Duke.

I wish people would focus less on some nebulous benefit they give to someone else by listening to them, and instead focus on the good you're doing for yourself, because listening to other people is really good for you, even and especially if you disagree with them. It's good for you neurologically, it's good for you physically, and emotionally. In fact, people who are friendly with their neighbors have longer life spans, less likely to suffer a heart attack, less likely to suffer from depression -- you get the same exact results from small talk, those little worthless talks about the weather that you have with the barista or the person in the doctor's waiting room.

So, if I could just get people to just be quiet for a second, use social media to express yourself, it's set up for that, but then spend the rest of your time actually listening to other people's experience. You would be surprised at how that's almost medical in how effective it is at making you a healthier, more effective person.

JORDAN: I love this concept and I love this idea of becoming more empathetic and listening with empathy and things like that. I just want to make sure that myself and everyone listening can wrap our heads around this. Do you have a baby step or two that we can started with right away? Because of course I'm thinking, "Yes, listen with empathy," and I know I could walk right out of this conversation and go, "Shoot, I'm not sure I know what that even means. I think I do but I'm not really sure how to get started."

CELESTE: Okay, so the first thing is, when a conversation begins, the first thing you should say is, "I'm not going to leave this conversation until I've learned something about this other person," and that's something you can do. It's concrete and it's simple. That you can do in pretty much any conversation that you have.

Another thing you can do -- and this is for people that hate small talk, because I really, really suggest you start small talking more, especially to strangers -- that thing that you can

do is start by having these little conversations with people who are paid to be nice to you. And you think I'm kidding, but I'm not. Your grocery store clerk, your barista at Starbucks -- and the reason I say this is because number one, there is no risk. Know that's not going to be a long conversation, you know they're not going to get into argument with you about gun violence, they have to be nice and polite to you.

So, it's going to be rewarding, you're actually going to feel an emotional lift after that's over from that friendly conversation, and it's short. It's maybe 90 seconds to 2 minutes long. And if you start by just saying, "I'm going to have one of those conversations every single day," then you will already start to be on your road. You don't start to be Dr. Freud, right? You don't say, "Okay, I'm going to be more empathetic. From now on I'm the Dalai Lama." That's not how you begin. Just begin with these little tiny moments of hearing someone else and having a friendly exchange.

JORDAN: Okay, so this is brilliant, and we do teach a lot of this similar technique in our live programs, which is, "Hey, if you're feeling really introverted or if you really don't feel like you can start conversations, there's going to be servers, bartenders, waiters, and other folks like that that literally are paid to be nice to you. They can't reject you, it's be really poor form for the business. These are very, very tiny little baby steps.

And I think many of us, of course most of the people listening here are not afraid of people. We can practice these techniques and this drill or this exercise in many different situations, but I think you're right, having this ready when you need it on deck and if you have a problem with maybe getting started with this or you feel silly doing it, a great way to do this is of course with servers and other people that are paid to be with you at that time and deal with it and make it less awkward or basically take the conversational hot potato into their own hands.

And honestly, Jason brought up a good point. I'm going to throw you under the bus here, Jason. I know that this is cliche, but a

lot of folks, you see this on television and things like that -- a lot of people hire escorts and things like that to do that. I have a few female friends who are in that line of work and they say, "You'd be surprised how many clients hire us just to talk," and I used to not believe them but now that I'm older and I've met all kinds of folks, I actually believe it a lot more than I did before.

JASON: And by throwing me under the bus you mean that I threw that out as a topic of conversation.

JORDAN: Yeah, I threw it -- yeah, he --

CELESTE: Yeah, he made it sound, Jason, like you're out there hiring escorts.

JASON: He really did.

CELESTE: That's what he made it sound like.

JORDAN: That's exactly what I did not mean to do. I'm sorry. I'm so sorry about that. That is a big no-no. Somebody came in with a glass of tea and I lost my train of thought. That's funny.

CELESTE: I was listening carefully. That sounded like Jason spends all of his disposable money on kired women, but okay.

JASON: That's why I'm always asking for a raise.

JORDAN: Yeah, I was going to say not all of his disposable income but just some of it.

CELESTE: Some of it is spent on beer.

JORDAN: Yeah.

JASON: So true.

CELESTE: You know, it really is not that deep and I say this to people all the time. It's not that deep. It really isn't You can have these

meaningless exchanges, even if you're just talking about how cold it is. I realize people are like, "That's such a waste of time." it really isn't. You would be surprised at some of the research that's been going on. In fact, they did this incredible project and one of my favorite researchers -- and that's how big of a dork I am that I have a favorite researcher -- Nicholas Epley, who does a lot of this --

JORDAN: Oh, yeah.

CELESTE: -- work.

JORDAN: Yeah, big fan.

CELESTE: Yeah, oh, yeah. He did this great study in which he had people, forced them to talk to people on the subway and on the train and in doctors' offices, and almost universally they predicted they were going to hate it and they thought it was going to waste their time and almost universally it was exactly the opposite that was true. The mood lift they got from chatting with people lasted for a good portion of the day. It changed their day. So, what you think of as small talk is not small at all.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

JORDAN: As a journalist, you don't necessarily agree with all the people that you speak to and I know that in the book, you've mentioned several times that you can learn from any conversation, you can learn from any person that you interview, you can learn from anybody in your everyday life that you don't necessarily agree with. Can you tell us how we can have a productive disagreement? Because I think in today's day and age, especially with the current political system and the dthings that we're seeing in the news, we're not having that many, or we're certainly not having enough productive disagreements.

CELESTE: Yeah, you're absolutely correct. The first step is to stop trying to change people's minds. I feel like I say that a lot but I also feel like it needs to be said a lot because oftentimes people think a

productive conversation is when you've proved somebody wrong. So, here's why those lead to arguments. It is almost impossible to change somebody's mind over the course of a conversation. We at least know enough about thought patterns to know that. And I would just have challenged people to think of the last time they had a disagreement with someone and the other person turned around and said, "You know what? You are 100 percent right. You've convinced me completely." It doesn't happen.

And so in your endless quest to change somebody else's mind, you're Don Quixote tilting at windmills and of course it's going to make you frustrated and of course it's going to make you angry and it's going to make the other person defensive, and of course you're going to have a terrible time. Instead of this generational quest to either change somebody else's mind or the other terrible strategy, which is to avoid topics that you think might end up in argument --

JORDAN: Right, I was going to mention that we actually know that so we just avoid talking with people that we might disagree with or avoid that subject.

CELESTE: Yeah and how's that working?

JORDAN: Yeah, that's how we got here in the first place, isn't it?

CELESTE: So now, we don't talk about it which means we don't know anything about politics unless they're our own. We don't know anything about life experience unless it's our own. So, instead, we are going to have to learn to talk about these subjects without arguing and the way that you do that is to stop trying to prove people wrong. Just quit it. Give up on it. It's not going to happen, so don't get frustrated, and instead, as I mentioned, go in there intending to learn from the other person. That, you can do 100 percent of the time. So, that's the first step.

The next one is to show respect and I really mean show respect for that other human being as somebody who has been through

a tragedy in their life, as someone who has come up with those opinions even if they're honestly wrong, objectively wrong, even if they're an anti-vaxxer. They have still come to that opinion through a series of life experiences that deserve respect. Every human being deserves respect, not every opinion. But, you can show the human being respect while you counteract the opinion. So, that's the second thing.

The third thing is to ask questions. Ask good, simple questions of people. And of course in order to ask questions, most of the time you have to be listening to them.

And then the final thing that I always say to people is end well because it's really difficult to open yourself up and tell people the honest truth about your thoughts and your beliefs in this particular day and age. And one of the horrifying things that we have discovered, and this is through Pew Research, is that the Internet -- the toxic environment on social media -- instead of bringing more people's views into the arena, which is what we thought it would do, is actually discouraging even from having face to face conversations. The kind of toxic insults and hate they meet online, is making them less likely to talk to people in real life. So, when someone has that kind of conversation with you, thank them. Say, "Thank you. It's not easy to share these kind of opinions and I appreciate it."

JORDAN: I would imagine most people never think to do that and then of course you're kind of left with the dialogue in your own head after the disagreement. And I know I've been guilty of this because I've had a lot of crazy conversations with people and then you get an email later that night that's like, "Hey, I hope we're still cool, I know this was --" And I'm thinking, "What are you talking about? Oh, you went away from that thinking I was annoyed or that I'm judging you for that. Oh, my gosh." So, you have to end well because you don't know what's going on in the other person's internal dialogue unless you do.

CELESTE: Absolutely. And you also want to encourage that person to try it again, even if it's not with you. You want to have that

experience be positive enough that we can be change agents. We can encourage people to start having these conversations, even with other people.

JORDAN: You're right about the Internet, as well. First of all, we're hiding behind our computer, we can oftentimes be anonymous. And I don't know if this has shown up in your research as well -- these algorithms that things like Facebook use, they will start to show you things that you like or have interacted or engaged with.

So, the problem is, if you're not clicking like, 'like,' or you're not engaging with people who are speaking about politics that aren't yours, it will just show you less of that. So, then you think, "Well everyone thinks the same way as me, just look at my Facebook feed," because it's your 1000 friends that all agree with everything you say for the most part, and the one guy who disagrees stops showing up in your news feed and vice versa. So, you end up in a bubble and then you don't even have that diversity of opinion so when you do hear someone disagree with you, you just think, "Can you believe that weirdo thinks that we should have universal health care? He must be the one guy I know that thinks that.

CELESTE: What kind of person --

JORDAN: What a strange weirdo that we have here? I'm going to unfriend this person now.

CELESTE: Exactly, and you stop seeing them, actually, as a real human being, worthy of respect with their own thoughts and opinions and experiences. And you know, here's another really interesting thing, and this research is brand new. They discovered that when you read somebody's argument in text, even in a newspaper, when you read it you are more likely to think, "That person is wrong because they're an idiot." When you hear them say it to you face to face, you are more likely to think, "That person has a different opinion from yours because their experience is different."

JORDAN: Really?

CELESTE: Yeah.

JORDAN: Well, that's kind of terrible.

CELESTE: It is. But it explains a lot, does it not?

JORDAN: Yeah, it does.

CELESTE: A little glimmer of light here for you Jordan --

JORDAN: Please, please.

CELESTE: -- is that you get even a good benefit when you hear them explain it in their own voice. It's not quite as good as face to face, but it's still -- they're more likely to think of you as an actual breathing, existing human being when you hear their voice. So, for a podcaster, that's some good news.

JORDAN: Yeah, okay. Good. Well, thank goodness for that. And I think people do really appreciate that about the medium, but again, not a show about podcasting. It's a show about Jason's prostitute habit. I think that.

JASON: I am never going to live this one down even though I did nothing wrong.

JORDAN: What you did wrong was working with me, Jason. You'll never do that again. All right. Another thing that we deal with all the time is of course we now have the Internet in our pockets. Even if we're not talking about Internet, we're talking about smartphone constantly interrupting us. And I know we've discussed this on the show before with guys like Nir Eyal who wrote Hooked which is about why things like apps and services are creating addictions but my solution to this, Celeste, was, "Okay, fine, I'm just going to turn my phone on airplane mode." But, you're arguing in the book that, "Look, even if this thing is

not on, it's still impacting the quality of our conversations." What's going on here?

CELESTE: Yeah, that's how powerfully your cell phone distracts not just you but anybody else. So they did this research in the U.K. in which they had a whole bunch of people come in -- strangers -- come in and have conversations. Obviously there's a control group where they're just sitting there chatting. But, in half of those conversations, the researchers would just walk in and set a cell phone on the table. It belonged to neither of the people, it never made any noise, and yet when those people came out of there and they asked them to talk about the conversation, they were something like 60-75 percent more likely to say the other person was unempathetic, untrustworthy, and unfriendly, which means that smartphone, when it's visible, is having an effect on you brains that you are not aware of and not in control of. And that means you cannot just turn your phone off, you can't just put down, you have to put it away.

JORDAN: What the hell? How is that possible? Why is this happening? That is so weird.

CELESTE: We don't know but of course we don't know. The smartphone revolution has been so rapid. The growth in smartphones and cell phones -- at this point the United Nations says that more people have access to a smartphone than a working toilet. It has been explosive and the research takes years to complete, one little study at a time.

So, we just have not had the time to figure out what kind of effect a smartphone is having on our human relationships, on our brains, on our communication -- we do know that little inklings that we're beginning to get are that it is dramatic. They are affecting your brain even when they're not making noise, and frankly, they're usually making noise. People need to turn their notifications off. You do not need to know every single time somebody likes your post on Facebook, you don't need to know every time retweets you. By having those notifications constantly going in the background, you are actually reducing

your IQ. Your IQ drops. Why? Because part of your brain is all times thinking about that phone and whether or not it's going to make noise. Part of your brain's processing power is taken up by background noise, so don't just put it down, put it away.

JORDAN: That makes sense to me. And we've all had this weird thing happen where you think it's ringing or vibrating and you'd find out it's not even in your pocket.

CELESTE: Yeah.

JORDAN: Have you ever had that, phantom ringing?

CELESTE: The phantom phone, yep.

JORDAN: That's always been sort of scary. But, along those same lines, it's like -- yeah, you're right, we are always kind of waiting for it to do something if it's in our peripheral vision, if it's doing something, or we hear an animal outside and we check our phone because we just heard something and it was probably that. Or something will catch my eye on the screen here that I'm looking at my notes and it's some sort of weird notification or Dropbox turns on and pops up for a second and I'll find myself checking -- in the past -- checking my phone when it used to be on my desk here. And it was just any sort of little thing that might break my focus I will then go to the phone thinking it was the phone. So, of course it makes sense that that would happen during a conversation.

The scary part is that I didn't think that would ever negatively affect what I was doing, I just thought, "Oh, for a split second I looked at my phone, no big deal, I'm still listening." The fact that we have in effect, a negative effect that's provable through science --

CELESTE: Yeah.

JORDAN: -- about how we feel about the other person in that conversation because our or their phone was sitting on a table off, is a little scary.

CELESTE: Think of it this way. For example, did you enjoy high school, Jordan?

JORDAN: I got really bored and started getting in trouble. So, eh, no. Let's say no.

CELESTE: Jason, aside from the paid escorts, did you enjoy high school?

JASON: Absolutely hated it.

CELESTE: Okay, the vast majority of people hated high school. Now, I want you to think for a moment about one of the reasons most of us hated high school, and it's partly because high school is about constantly having to worry about what other people think. Making decisions about what you wear, having to worry about how you wear your hair, what kind of music you listen to, you don't want to be the weirdo or the dork, right? You want to at least just fit in and become invisible.

JORDAN: That didn't work out for Jason or myself but yeah, we tried.

CELESTE: Right. Now here's the thing, think about Facebook and social media for a second. Social media is all about saying things that are going to elicit likes and responses and people are going to think are cool and judging the music that you like because you just posted it and judging the picture that you just took of yourself. We've literally turned our adult lives into the thing we hated most about high school. So, of course it's going to affect our human relationships. We are making ourselves miserable on purpose.

JORDAN: Ugh, bring us some good news here, Celeste, for God's sake. What can we do about this? Be present or be gone was a concept I took from this particular phase of the book and l love

that. Be honest with yourself when you're being distracted and be honest with the other people who are sitting in front of you.

CELESTE: Yeah, so okay, here's the good news: the fix is so simple and costs nothing. I'm in public radio, I'm bringing you a solution that is zero cost.

JORDAN: Perfect.

CELESTE: You don't have donate during pledge drive. And all you have to do is put the phone down for at least once a day and just get out there and talk to somebody and it doesn't matter who it is. Take five minutes out of your day.

JORDAN: Damn, I was putting my phone in airplane mode then I got this watch. I'm wearing my phone now. That's just terrible.

CELESTE: It is terrible.

JORDAN: Oh, my goodness.

CELESTE: In terms of, "Be present or be gone," take the risk out of it. And by this I mean: if you're not able to focus on a conversation with someone, tell them and walk away. And by that I mean: I don't necessarily want you to have more conversations although I think you will. I want you to have better conversations. So, if you are not in a place, if you're too distracted, if you're too busy, if you're too irritated, if you have a headache and you're not going to be able to actually engage in that conversation in any kind of positive way, just say, "Listen, I have a blazing headache and I'm not going to be able to focus on what you say because my head is aching. Let's put a pin in this. Let me come back to you," or what to all of my staff all the time because I have adult ADD is, "My brain is in a million scattered pieces right now, I cannot focus on a single word that you're saying. I need you to check back with me in 10 or 15 minutes, I have to gather myself."

JORDAN: Ironically that might lead to a more productive conversation because I can see myself saying that and someone saying, “Oh, my gosh, are you okay?” “Well, here’s what’s actually going on.” So, I think we can all focus almost always on something that if we’re being distracted by something we could always choose to discuss that. “Yeah, I’m actually going through a lot of business stress right now,” and then I would rather talk about that rather than perhaps the subject at hand.

Of course, if we’re being distracted by an email, that’s one thing. But, I think a lot of us are distracted about bigger things that are happening in our lives, which perhaps should be the focus of our interactions with our friends and family at some point because we can find support there. I understand what you’re saying. I think exploring what’s distracting us might be -- as long as it’s not just an Instagram notification -- could be something useful. It could be something that our brain is telling us to pay attention to.

CELESTE: Totally agree with you. And if we did that more often, those are really productive. Even if the other person has zero response or advice to offer, just having to articulate what’s going on actually turns out to be very good for your brain in terms of problem solving. It’s great.

JORDAN: Tell us about conversational narcissism, because this, to me, was interesting. We all know people who can’t shut up, but what I did not know -- until, of course, I’d read the book -- was that these chemicals that we’re getting from talking about ourselves are the same chemicals we get from drugs. I mean, no wonder some people can’t stop talking about ourselves, we’re addicted to it.

CELESTE: Yeah, I mean that’s astonishing. The FMRI, the Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging machine is truly the miracle machine for me, anyway. Because it’s the first time we’ve been able to watch the brain thinking while someone’s still conscious. And so you get this research out of Harvard in 2014, which has now been duplicated in other places, showing that

talking about yourself -- what scientists call self-disclosure -- activates the same pleasure center as sex and heroine and chocolate, for that matter. And here's the interesting thing about that study: first of all, people were absolutely willing to turn down extra money, higher pay, in order to continue talking about themselves. They offered them more money for the study if they would talk about something else, but they chose lower pay to continue talking about themselves. And here's the kicker, for me anyway, they were in an FMRI machine. Have you seen those?

JORDAN: Are those the enormous tubes?

CELESTE: Yeah.

JORDAN: I mean, they're not small, yet. So, yeah, I'm excited for when they make them things that we can wear around in public and they're wireless. Can you imagine what we're going to learn then? But yeah, I know what an FMRI is.

CELESTE: But my point being these people had no idea whether there was anybody else in the room. That's my point. They were still talking about themselves even knowing that they very possibly might be alone.

JORDAN: Well that just explains so much of my childhood, but yes, continue.

CELESTE: And they're still getting an orgasmic pleasure from it. So, if you are one of those people that finds yourself talking about yourself a lot or maybe you haven't become aware of that yet and maybe you leave this podcast and you start becoming more aware of it and it's disheartening to you, do not be disheartened, that is an almost universal human experience. We all do it. Of course you do it. It feels great. But, it does tend to make us less honest or realistic about our conversations. So, if you think about the job interview you had where you thought it went great, you came out of there feeling awesome and then didn't know why you never got the job, or perhaps more common even

is the date that you had where you felt fantastic and you felt like you really clicked and they never called you back. That may be because your experience of that pleasure was not shared.

JORDAN: That explains why I was single for so long before doing a lot of the work I needed to do on myself during the course of this show. If your twenties were lonely, think about how much you talked about yourself on dates. And it's funny because we can look at other people doing that and we think, "Oh, gosh, this person never shuts up. They are so arrogant or this is such a -- this is the John show, look at him never stop talking," and then we go out and do it and we do the exact same thing and we think, "I'm so glad I don't do that. I'm great."

CELESTE: The other thing is -- and this is important to remember in all aspects of our life -- is that probably the most valuable thing anybody can give to us is objective feedback. We almost never get it. We are quite accurate in analyzing and identifying other people's failings and the places in which they need improvement. We are terrible at identifying that for ourselves. And so objective feedback, which again, you are not getting most of the time, even when your friend or co-worker says, "No, no, no, I'm being totally honest with you," research shows they are not. Objective feedback is incredibly valuable and it's for this very reason. Our brains delude us often. They change reality for us, to make us feel better.

JORDAN: That certainly nice of the brain to do that, it just doesn't really help us learn, right?

CELESTE: It doesn't.

JORDAN: So, what should be done about that? I mean, obviously it's natural for our brain to do things like this to make it feel good, to make our story, our narrative coexist nicely with what we want our reality to be but it sounds like it's not very good for making other people feel heard and for connecting.

CELESTE: You can use this to your advantage, Jordan. And what I mean by this is: if you are trying to make someone else feel good, let them talk about themselves. If you're trying to negotiate a deal at work, let the other person talk about themselves and their business and what they're doing. You can actually use this to your advantage by making someone else feel great by asking them questions and giving them an opportunity to talk about themselves and their experience.

JORDAN: Celeste, this has been amazing. I love this. I wish we could keep going but people gotta get out of their car, get out of their driveway, go make dinner, go to work, wherever they're listening to this, and I'm inclined to let them do that. But, you should, of course, come back on the show at some point because I think we're about one tenth of the way through the good stuff in the book and I would just love to keep going.

CELESTE: That's very kind. I've had a great time.

JORDAN: Jason, wow, this one was really good, man. You were not kidding. You grabbed the right book. People had recommended her before and I am glad we listened because this was really good. Lots of stuff here. We only got a little way through the book as well and there was just so many interesting things in here. One thing that blew my mind, Jason, I don't know if you remember this, there was a study that showed that the more money we have in the bank, the less able we are to recognize other people's emotions and to feel empathy. That's freaking scary, isn't it.

JASON: It explains a lot about our current society, doesn't it?

JORDAN: It kind of does, right? And it sort of explains away a lot of people who are sort of the 'haves' really just don't understand the 'have-nots' at all. And even though they think they do, they really have no clue. And I count myself in that boat. We have our own privilege, just being born white dudes in America, we have a lot of things we've never had to think about and it's really easy to just say, "Well, I worked for my money," right? I

understand that so I get it. But the fact that there's a scientific connection between what you have in the bank and recognizing other people's emotions, yikes. Yikes! There's a lot of stuff like that in the book, of course. The title is *We Need to Talk*.

JASON: So, since we missed so much, it's definitely an opportunity to go pick up the book and dive into this stuff because Celeste goes so deep and reads all of the scientific material so we didn't have to. We get the benefit of her time and effort and bringing this stuff to us. But yeah, we didn't get to it all in the show, but definitely get this book.

JORDAN: You know what, Jason, that I thought was really interesting was that conversations, they give that dopamine thing, you're talking about yourself, that does the brain chemical thing. So, as it seems -- and she mentioned orgasmic reactions in the FMRI --

JASON: Yeah. Yeah.

JORDAN: So, next time you're tempted to call the ladies of the night, just do a podcast. Podcasting is cheaper than hookers, Jason. That's the takeaway from today's episode.

JASON: Listen here, buddy. Buddy, come on. Yes, yes, it is cheaper than a booty call at four in the morning with your ladies of the night --

JORDAN: Your ladies of the night.

JASON: -- but, that was not me.

JORDAN: Yours.

JASON: You set me up. You set me up --

JORDAN: Yep.

JASON: -- on that one.

JORDAN: That's true.

JASON: I can't believe it.

JORDAN: It was an accident but it turned out really well for me.

JASON: I've known you for what, five, six years now? That was not an accident.

JORDAN: Yeah. If you enjoyed this one, don't forget to thank Celeste on Twitter. We'll have that linked in the show notes as well. Tweet at us your number one takeaway from Celeste Headlee. I'm @theartofcharm on Twitter. I'm also on Instagram @jordanharbinger. And don't forget, we have worksheets for today's episode so you can make sure you understand everything you need to know from Celeste Headlee. We have those worksheets for each guest and this show is no exception. That link is in the show notes at theartofcharm.com/podcast.

I also want to encourage you to join us in the challenge here at theartofcharm.com/challenge. That challenge is about improving your networking and connection skills and inspiring those around you to develop a personal and professional relationship with you. It's free, a lot of people aren't sure about that. That's the whole idea. It's a fun way to start the ball rolling and get some forward momentum and apply the things you are learning on the show to your life here everyday. We'll also send you our fundamentals Toolbox that I mentioned earlier in the show, which includes some great practical stuff, ready to apply, right out of the box on reading body language, nonverbal communication, the science of attraction, negotiation techniques, networking and influence strategies, persuasion tactics, and everything else that we teach [1:09:55.0]. This will make you a better networker, a better connector, and a better thinker. That's all at the theartofcharm.com/challenge.

This episode was produced by Jason DeFillippo, Jason Sanderson is our audio engineer and editor, show notes on the website are by Robert Fogarty, transcriptions by TranscriptionOutsourcing.net -- I am your host Jordan Harbinger. If you can think of anyone who might benefit from the episode you've just heard, please pay us the highest compliment and pay it forward by sharing this episode with that person. It only takes a moment and great ideas are meant to be shared. So, share the show with friends and enemies and leave everything and everyone better than you found them.