

## **Episode 37 – \*Special Edition\* - A Focus on Emotion**

Phil: Hello and welcome to the Emotion at Work Podcast where we take a deep dive into the human condition by having conversations you wouldn't necessarily expect. Now welcome to this episode of a special edition. It's one where I want to go back and revisit previous episodes that we've had and I want to look at how do they compare, how do they contrast, what overlaps or similarities are there between them because I think often on this podcast we talk about particular terminology or topics that actually would really benefit from a wider view and a wider exploration which is necessarily possible in the conversations I have with each guest as I go. So for this one we're picking up on the term or the themes of emotions and or emotional intelligence so to do that we are diving back into four previous episodes. We are going way back to the beginning, back to episode two where Sarah-Jane Lennie came onto the podcast to talk about emotional authenticity. We are also going to talk about Episode twenty five where Cliff Lansley came on to talk about the world of emotional intelligence. Then we've got Jo Wainwright on episode twenty six talking about emotional exploitation and we have got James Gross from episode twenty seven and what I have done is gone back through each of those episodes and looked for particular aspects that I think are really interesting to pull out and I have deliberately put this podcast together as food for thought, as an opportunity for you to challenge or further your thinking so there are no answers to come in the course of this episode, what you will get though is challenging of your thinking. So we are going to go first into episode 25 with Cliff and I want to look at the definition of emotion or emotions because I have tried to define them in a couple of different occasions with two different guests so let's start with Cliff and this is towards the beginning of the podcast where I ask him to define emotions for me:

Cliff: I don't think there is a widely accepted single definition of emotion. But what I think features in most definitions that gets accepted and support from most is the fact that it is a process. So, an emotion is a process. It happens to us. It's not something we choose, and it helps us to deal with matters of importance to our welfare without thinking and that little cluster is important. It's what matters to us because part of emotion and the way we react and respond to stimulus/triggers, is the desire to either save our lives and enrich our lives, develop relationships, or to motivate action and some of that has evolved. Primates shared the same emotions and if we didn't have those and we just relied on conscious thought we probably wouldn't survive to be the 59 plus years I managed to make, riding difficult motorbikes. When riding motorcycles we had a couple of incidents where vehicles and animals came onto the tracks. Thinking and training doesn't come into this. It's just an object coming into sight which triggers a response of threat and then the fear of harm from that makes you move away from the objects. Working out the vectors of the speed, the size of the animal or the vehicle coming from your periphery vision and working out whether you are going fast enough or slow enough to make that, all that happens in a flash and the swerve of the handlebars, the avoidance of the object seems to be happening much of the time without thought.

Phil: Alright so what we've got there is him outlining that it's a process and that it is something that happens to us. The other episode that I asked our guest to define our emotions in was with James



Gross on episode 27 and him and Cliff articulate it in a similar but also slightly different way, so let's head straight over to the episode where I ask him to define what emotions are?

James: I don't think we have a great answer to that. This is something that's currently debated in the field. I would say an emotion is a multipart response to situations that we perceive as being important and relevant to our goals. When I say a multipart response that's just a fancy way of saying that that response has a behavioural component, so we're more likely to do some things than others in that situation. It also has an experiential component, in other words it feels like something, being in an emotional state. There is also a physiological component to their response so that our bodies respond in particular ways.

Phil: So it's got those different aspects and different components then, okay that makes sense.

James: The labels we give these multipart responses to situations that we see as important to us, we give them labels like fear and anger and sadness and so forth, and the debates in the field have been around how tightly coupled are these different aspects. So do I always feel something when I'm in an emotional state or could I have an emotion and not really in the moment be aware of it? So there are a lot of debates about it but I think it's a common sense way of thinking about emotions that says emotions are more than just a feeling. So it's the feeling plus the behavioural response, plus the physiological changes, the heart rate changes, the sweating in your palms, the respiratory changes, that whole package is what we mean by emotions. So that's our starting point I think for most people today and there are a lot of debates, are they universal? Does everyone everywhere have exactly the same emotions? I think the answer is no. Are there some important similarities? I think the answer is yes. How does the brain generate these emotions? Huge debates about the brain bases of fear and anger, and sadness. But I think if you ask people in the field or even outside the field what's the basic common sense definition of emotion they would say something like what I said, this multipart response plays out over seconds to minutes. It has to do with helping you position yourself with respect to an important situation given your goals at the moment and sometimes that positioning is helpful for you given your goals and sometimes the way you respond in an emotion is not helpful and that brings us back to the sole issue of what would you do, how would you regulate this so called emotion if it turns out that it is not really being helpful to your anger, your physiology, your behavioural response where you really feel like hitting somebody. That may not all be in line with your goals to be a good parent to a young child who's really frustrating you and in that circumstance, that package, that multipart package of anger we would feel in the moment, we might think this is not the way I want to be with my child and so at that moment we would decide this package of anger is not what I want, it's not helpful given my goals and so I am going to try and do something about it and that's what brings us to emotion regulation.

Phil: So one of the things that interest me from James definition is this multi-part response aspect that he talks about and that links back into what Cliff was articulating in his process. So this idea that there is a multipart response where you have the physical, the physiological responses and those other aspects that James talks about as well. James doesn't quite articulate it as a process, he just says there are different parts of it but you can hear the similarities with some of the aspects that

both Cliff and James are talking about but one of the other things that James brings in is this idea of goals. So depending on what it is that you want to achieve he brings in and for me that is a really interesting aspect, so one I will come back to later. It is something Cliff again refers to when he is defining something different to emotions when actually he is defining emotional intelligence, is when he brings the idea of goals in but that multipart response aspect is tricky and this process aspect is tricky because if we think about the classic popularised Daniel Goleman two by two definition of emotional intelligence, we'll come onto other people's definitions, but if we look at the classic two by two which is the self-awareness and self-management and then awareness of other's management, then what Cliff talks about in terms of the emotions being a process beyond consciousness, they happen to us then where does awareness kick in. Where down that process, down that timeline can our awareness as individuals or can our awareness of that emotion or those emotions, where can they come in and likewise with that multi-part response there are, can you stop those physiological changes in your heart rate or your respiratory rate or the release of the particular chemicals in your system, so where can that awareness come from or where does that awareness kick in because and this is one of the soap boxes that I get on during one of the episodes is my challenge is the term self-awareness, is it often uses the throw away term to suggest that it is something that is easy to do but actually it is something that is really, really hard to do to become aware of how you are feeling, what's made you feel that way, how you can work with that feeling in that particular moment or that particular context that you're in. So if I think about those moments then, as James talked about, he defines emotions as lasting seconds to minutes, it is not something that sticks around all day and what James' area of research in particular is in the way that we regulate those emotions and I have, I guess challenges being the linguist that I am. When people talk about managing your emotions, I can't think of anybody or anything that likes being managed so I tend to reframe it or rephrase it as working with our emotions and James' term then is regulating those emotions so it's not about having them, it's about how do we work with those in light of the goals that we have within it. So let's head back to James, what he is going to do now is he is going to go into his research more specifically talking about the different families of emotion regulation and what I want you to listen out for as you hear this is think back to the definition that Cliff articulated earlier of that process and then think how might these families that James is about to explain, how might those families map across that process model that Cliff outlined earlier on.

James: So I think emotions as we have discussed are this multi-componential or multipart responses that play out overtime and emotion regulation simply put is just activating a goal to try to modify one or more aspects of emotion, the experiential part, the behavioural part, the physiological part or the whole package and so you may be trying to turn it up, you may be trying to turn it down. Any of that counts as long as you have a goal in the moment to try to modify one or more aspects of an emotion, that is emotion regulation.

Phil: And your research suggests that there is a number of different families of emotion regulation. Do you want to outline what those are?

James: I would be happy to Phil. From my perspective and thinking about how people might go about regulating emotions it's helpful to ask a prior question which is, if emotions unfold overtime and have these different parts how do we think about how they unfold and how they are generated and let's do this in a really simple way and so we found it helpful, there is some

situational features, there's some aspects of a situation that we attend to rather than other aspects of that situation. And then once we have attended to those aspects of the situation we then think about them in particular ways and it's this combination of being in the right kind of situation, attending to it, and then thinking about those aspects of this situation that you are attending to that leads to this multi-componential response. And if we use that very, very simple idea about emotions playing out in certain situations, when we attend to certain features and then think about it in particular ways we can then use that very simple cartoon for how emotions get generated to make some distinctions. So these are the families of emotion regulation processes that we and other people have been interested in studying and so if you start at the front end, let's take a situation where again, we are going back to a family context but you can take a work context, so let's say it could be a child, but it could also be a co-worker in a particular situation who's doing something that you find annoying. That you would really prefer they not do, so that's the situation and you notice your child's using horrible table manners. You notice your co-worker playing music without earbuds in a way that is obviously going to distract you and other people around him or her and that is a situation you then attend to it, you pay attention to it. Now if you were totally distracted and you didn't even notice your child's bad behaviour or your co-workers inconsiderate behaviour you wouldn't have an emotional response because you wouldn't even attend to it. But if you do attend to it you then might have the beginnings of an emotional response, but what's crucial, is it's not just the situation and your attention to it, it's how you think about it. So if you think as a parent my child is wilfully misbehaving and trying to get me angry and is just not amounting to the kind of person I want them to be, that can elicit anger and frustration, but if you have a different thought, if you think, he's just playing around, he's had a really stressful week. It's great that he has some spunk and he is not just bending over and kind of doing all the things that we want him to do, good for him. That's a completely different response and you have a very different emotion and so for me just noticing that it's a situation that you have to attend to and then think about in particular ways that gets the emotion going tells me, one way to fix or change or modify or regulate an emotion is what we call situational. So it's situation selection or situation modification. What does that mean, that's just a fancy way of saying, look as people who can plan their lives we can make decisions about which situation we are likely to encounter. We can avoid people we know that can be toxic, we can seek out people we know we are going to like to be with and the situational selection or situation modification, that's where you change a situation in a way that enhances the emotional impact, those are very early types of emotion regulation. The so called situational strategies. A second family Phil would come at the next step, at the attentional step, so now let's say, we are in a situation, we haven't selected the right situation or it's a situation snuck up on us, now we are focused on attentional forms of emotional regulation asking how can we modify our attention for example, distracting ourselves, or really focusing on something else in a way that would modify the downstream emotion that we would otherwise have. That's the second family. So we have situational strategies, attentional strategies. The third family of strategies have to do with cognitive change and that's where we are focusing on the thought process and we are trying to say, normally I'd think about this as a co-worker being very inconsiderate. Wilfully trying to irritate all the rest of us in the office, but I might cut him some slack and say look, maybe he doesn't know that he's way too loud for the rest of us. Maybe it is just ignorance, maybe he is just a little bit clueless. He is obviously new to the job, he doesn't really know the rules here. Maybe

he is not trying to piss us all off, maybe he is just clueless and that new way of thinking about it suggests new action. So instead of getting all pissed off, I will just say something politely. Would you mind using your earbuds, I am trying to take a phone call, and that cognitive change can totally affect your downstream emotions and then the forth family, Phil, is all the way at the end of the line. Let's say you haven't been able to do situational strategies or attentional strategies or even cognitive change strategies, you can still do what you call, response modulation and that is where you have, you know you have an emotion that is starting to come up. You're starting to get angry, starting to get frustrated but there, what you are trying to do, you just try to manage the actual behavioural outlet for example. So you would try not to look upset or angry in front of your child or co-worker. You still feel angry or upset but you just try to manage or suppress that emotional output and those are the major families. You can see what we are doing, we are saying how does emotion get generated in a situation. You attend to it, you think about it and that leads to this set of responses that we call emotion and all I'm sayings is this so called process model of emotion regulation just says, well let's just target each of those major steps in emotion generation. We can target the situation and try to change it. We can target the attention and try to change it. Target the cognitions and try to change those or we can target the actual responses themselves and those are the four families of emotion regulation processes.

Phil: So I asked you to think about, or listen out for how Cliff's definition of a process might fit over those four emotion regulation families that James has outlined there. I also want to go back to my point of awareness and that self-awareness aspect earlier on because if you think about the first family that James articulates which is a situational one, so for me this is something that actually, especially the situational selection one, is something that could occur within awareness or it could occur outside of awareness, so if I think about one of my colleagues in the past, she witnessed a car crash and she made a decision and I don't know whether it was conscious or not, but I remember her talking about how she didn't want to drive down that road again and she drove a different route to work and that is a really good example for me of situational selection aspect. I don't want to put myself in a situation where I believe that emotion will be triggered so therefore I will choose not to play. Now that might be within awareness, it might be that you, the individuals can choose to go, you know what, that person, whenever I see them they do these things, or I feel this way or they have this approach or they have this effect on me and therefore I am going to choose not to do it or you might just choose not to do it but that could be outside of awareness and I think that is a real big challenge for us as individuals and practitioners in terms of what is happening inside and outside of awareness. One of the things that we will come onto later with Jo Wainwright when we talk about her views of emotional exploitation is the extent to which certain things are okay or allowed in the workplace and for things to become more in your awareness involves greater reflection or reflective practise, it involves self-critique, self-review, it involves engaging or ascertaining views and perspectives and perceptions from other people, all of which can be really, really hard to do, partly because they can be time consuming, partly because they can challenge us and we might put ourselves at risk and we can make ourselves vulnerable in that way. I guess this links back to my point of self-awareness of being hard in terms of, it's a very easy to throw away two word terms but actually is really tricky to do. So if we then think about some of his other aspects, he talks about the intentional family and then he also talks about the response modulation family and again where do they sit and how do they sit with awareness. Now it might be that something has happened to you

before, in which case you can apply some attentional deployment or some cognitive reframe or some cognitive changing aspects to thinking about something differently but if it is a new novel experience it will leave you with that response modulation aspect, so I think if we go back to try and link these two definitions together part of me wonders if the situational aspects, if you are doing them with awareness, they actually sit before what Cliff was outlining in his articulations of emotions where there is a stimulus or a trigger that then goes into a database that associates it with a particular feeling that creates the appropriate physiological changes or responses to deal with whatever emotion we ought to deal with, whatever situation we might be in at that particular point in time and then the attentional aspects or the cognitive changes or the response modulation categorise that James was talking about. Do they fit after that emotion has been triggered and/or do we have multiple emotions running at the same time? Is the fact that we, if I think about a situation that I want to avoid doing, have I got an emotion running from the memory or the imagined situation that I would be in and then I am making choices to avoid it happening and I said at the beginning I wasn't going to give any answers and imposing questions and that's what this is really, this is me posing that question to you fair listener around when and how do the emotions occur and what makes them occur? Is it just stimulus that happens outside or external stimuli to us? Can it happen within from memories, from dreams, from imagination and all of those things as well? By the way I think the answer is yes to all of those but that's my personal view. So we have got two similar but slightly differing views on emotion and we have defined emotion and we have defined emotion regulation and the study though is broader than that so what I want to go back next then is to Sarah Jane-Lennie, I want to go back to episode two and her topic she was talking about emotional inauthenticity. Now Sarah Jane-Lennie works at Greater Manchester Police and this is part of her masters and I know she has gone on to do her PhD research into the impact of emotional inauthenticity on the police. So one of the key aspects that sits behind emotional inauthenticity is this idea of emotional labour which comes from an author called Arlie Hochschild. So what I wanted to do with SJ was define what that is, that's where we are going to pick up the conversation. We are going to pick it up at what is emotional labour?

SJ: What I mean stems, I will always talk from two perspectives, my personal experience and my research and academic angle. So when I talk about emotional inauthenticity I am reflecting on how as an employee in the organisations, as a police officer I know that I hid my emotions and almost to an extent I hid my personality, my sensitivity to traumatic incidents and how I empathised with people and it also spans from my research. Now I focus on emotional labour which is part of my title and emotional labour is a construct from Arlie Hochschild. It was developed in 1983 and she identified feeling rules which have been more latterly developed into display rules and these are implied rules around what the organisation expects as part of an unwritten contract that you will display. So she was looking at flight attendants. They were expected to always be happy and despite what was said to them and what they were dealing with they were going to be happy and the customer was always right and a smile on their faces and they suffered quite a bit with this. So the inauthenticity comes from that, my own experience of actually hiding my emotions and the research that looked about how we are expected to on behalf of the organisation and how the devices that we employ to how those measure, so surface acting and deep acting were the two devices that Arlie Hochschild talks about and that's how I explore how we fake emotions and what emotions we deal and suppress within policing as a concept of acting and deep acting and emotional regulation and dissonance.

Phil: So emotional labour, is that the process that happens inside people? So that is what individuals do within themselves?

SJ: It's two things, as I was eluding to as I was realising how long my answer was is employers have two options of how to engage with the feeling [inaudible 00.07.59] and this is what makes up the emotional labour. So the first one I said was surface acting and this is where it is an external display of the emotion. So being happy you can display happiness, smile, open gestures, eye contact but internally you can still feel, say if you were having a bad day or maybe you are depressed but you are hiding this by faking and acting out, actioning out what people would normally expect as a happy emotion, even if you are not feeling it. Then there is deep acting and this is where employees can try and modify their internal emotion. Try and manipulate their feelings so they are actually in line with the requirement. This is really interesting in the scope of police work because a lot of the previous research hasn't focused on police work and says that internal regulation, so deep acting can actually help with your wellbeing and mental health. That all depends on which emotion you are internally regulating. So if you are a police officer and you are trying to internally regulate empathy for somebody that is significantly stressed, talk about rape victims or the family of somebody that has died in tragic circumstances, it can be quite distressing. So the emotional labour is how we choose to comply with the feeling and displayables. It is so complicated depending on the emotion and how you engage with it as to what impact it can have on you psychologically.

Phil: Regular listeners to the podcast and/or those familiar with my work will know that I have got a big beaming smile on my face right now because SJ has brought in that wonderful thing that I call context. She is not the only one to mention it actually so we'll come back to context in a bit more detail later on. Where I wanted to go or what I wanted to think about next is if we go back to James Gross and his families of emotion regulation, when SJ's describing the situations that she's found either within her own practise or within her research they all seem to be around that, either response modulation and/or cognitive change aspect. So either it's the repressing or suppressing of the particular emotions that individuals maybe experiencing so they may be scared, police officers maybe scared of this situation, they may be sad about something that's happened, maybe angry about something that has happened but they have to push all of that down, or push all of that away and what SJ is describing is that that's what happens, those emotions get pushed down or they get pushed away and they don't get explored or worked with in anyway and there are no structures or mechanisms within place within the police that allow for the officers to do that and that's how she links it into emotional inauthenticity that what's happening is officers are having to display or portray emotions that they may not actually be experiencing and this then challenges some of the narratives that we have talked about earlier on so if Cliff's definition that emotions unbidden and they happen to us, if there are stimulus or stimuli that make those emotions happen, how do we explain the feelings that police officers maybe having when they are in the workplace because there are two aspects really here. There is one where they are not able to show and not able to express the emotion and there is a second aspect of this emotional inauthenticity which is displaying or showing something different. Also in the podcast SJ talks about how the main credible emotion is anger and how even if you are scared you have to turn that into anger and that transition then of moving it from one emotion to another, how does that fit with the emotion regulation aspect then

that James is talking about. Is this emotion regulation where it is, response modulation where I am modulating my response, my fear response down and then putting in and then putting in an anger response or is the anger actually a secondary experience of emotion? Is it that I feel scared, I then remember that I am not allowed to be scared and I have got to be angry instead so I then create the responses that I need to display that anger? Now if that emotion is performed or fanned is it a true emotion or does it even matter? And this emotional inauthenticity aspect, if I am performing emotions then where does the energy for that come from? How do I go about doing that? How does that affect me? SJ is talking about the impact it has on physical health, mental health, both at home and at work and relationships too, so how does... I am pausing because I am worried that I am just ranting and just asking lots of questions and I am trying to caution myself to think is that a helpful thing to do? I said I wanted this podcast to be about posing questions and not giving answers so I guess I have given myself permission to just ask lots of questions and I guess I would encourage you to think about how does that translate for you in your workplaces or your work lives or your family lives even? Are there particular times where you can't say things or you can't express things and how does that emotion inauthenticity affect you and would it be okay to be truly emotionally authentic. A researcher that is often quoted or sighted around the emotion field is that of Brené Brown and her work on vulnerability. Now even in her work she articulates how, she says, "I am not advocating for uncensored vulnerability and therefore I am also not advocating for uncensored emotional expression", what I am posing is questions about, are our emotions truly unbidden in that way, how do we got about and when do we perform emotions and how do those things overlap and interrelate? So if I link it back to James' multi-part process for a moment, so what SJ was articulating in her section was that those emotions, those physiological changes are still happening with those emotions but they have nowhere to go and they're manipulated into other feelings and they also end up doing harm with burnout etcetera and if you want to know more about burnout then I will signpost you to episode 17 where I talked to Amy King about her experiences with burnout but also now we need to think about other people because what Sarah Jane has brought in here is the idea that it is not just about the individual, it is not just about the individual officer it is about their family, it's about their friends, it's about their superior officers, this links us back in then to the classic Goleman look at emotions with that self-management awareness of other type aspects. So where I want to go next is to bring our final guest in who we haven't heard from yet which is Jo Wainwright and I'm bringing Jo in now because the work that SJ has just talked about in the experiences individuals are having in the context that she is talking about is quite different from some of the experiences that Jo has had and Jo talks about this idea of emotional exploitation and I will let her tell you what that means because she articulates it much much better than I will so let's handover to Jo and then we'll come back.

Jo: Yeah, these are just my definitions so I am happy for you to disagree and other people to disagree.

Phil: Yeah that's fine.

Jo: I think emotional work is quite simply when work is emotional. There are environments where work evokes emotion and there are environments and I mentioned earlier that is quite relative for people, so it is about individual experience but we might say that people will get more emotional. They are more likely to be emotionally triggered in environments where they

are talking about or observing or exposed to things like domestic violence or suicide and people dying and those kind of situations. So any work that triggers emotion and we might also say that emotion work is when organisations want people to come to work intrinsically motivated. So they want people to come to work and be motivated by the purpose of the work and align themselves to the values. Does that make sense?

Phil: It does.

Jo: I believe that emotional labour is when people are paid to do emotion work and to manage their own emotions. So part of their contractual agreement and what they are paid for is to be self-aware, self-knowing, to understand and recognise their own emotions. To manage them effectively so that they have choice and control in their behaviour that they exhibit and if you think of a counselling situation or a coaching situation or an addiction treatment situation that is the work. Emotional labour is being able to sit and provide a service for someone even though you might not feel like the things they had done as a person are great. So it is about managing your emotions and how you feel about the things you are going to come across. So you have it in that context. You also have it in a context where people expect people that they have employed to have a smile on their face or to be nice and be kind and do emotional labour so that they don't shout at somebody in a meeting. So again, there's spectrums, there's different levels of how much emotional labour we have to do and emotional labour is also the work that we do within our own selves and our own thinking and our mind and our physiology to present ourselves, behaviourally and visually in the right way so that we are communicating what we intend to communicate and our emotions are not leaking out or slipping out or interrupting what we are trying to do and making us ineffective. And while we are there I think emotional exploitation is when you ask someone to do emotional labour within the context of emotional work but you don't provide the resources for them to be able to do that effectively and safely.

Phil: So where you are not providing the hard hats, the high vis jackets and the things you need to keep you safe.

Jo: Absolutely, yeah but you have got people motivated by the purpose of the work that they do and not the money and not the conditions and not the perks and when you manage people in that way it is very easy to do implicit or explicit demands for more and better. Maximising on their emotional commitment to the work. When people are in those situations can exploit themselves, so things like, I know we are two staff members down this week but this new case that has just come in, this has happened to them and this has happened to them and I really need someone to do it, so emotionally tugging things and no one is going to go I am too busy to pick that up, so that person is just going to stay in the dire situation for another week. They are going to go I will make time, I will stay later, I will come in at the weekend.

Phil: You see I know you are talking about spectrums and you caveated that by saying it is relative but I think that is the same strategies used in...I nearly said in everyday work situations and then a I caught myself but I said it now so I will go with it. If I change that example from this person is in physical or physiological trauma therefore they need help, we are two people

down, so who is going to pick up this work. If I change that slightly to be this client has demanded that we deliver this work this week, I know we are two people down but if we don't deliver, this client is going to be unhappy and then the implication is if the client is unhappy, the client is not going to pay and if the client doesn't pay there is not going to be any revenue. If we do not have revenue then you have not got a job and then if you have not got a job you can't provide for yourself and your family and if you can't provide for your family, you know, so even though I know you are saying there is a spectrum I think even just in that example, you could easily change the service user is in dire need to the client wants this, or this person has asked for this, or we have promised to deliver X, or we have committed to deliver Y, or the business is expecting us to launch Z, or whatever that is and there's that expectation for people to pick up that work which will then have emotional demands on them, I don't think it is that different, or am I talking out my arse.

Jo: Neither. I think it is different based on the individuals reasons for coming to work and I think there are a lot of, I generalise, there are a lot of sectors or charities for example where people need money, people come to work because they need money and that is the baseline need and if that is not there and if it is not enough then it becomes a stronger driver and also at the same time the majority of the reason people come to work is about our purpose and that can be exactly the same for whatever work you do. My sister gets very enthusiastic and purposeful about her work and I love that about her and at one stage she was working for a paper recycling company and she has done a lot of work in systems and IT and she gets really passionate about the purposefulness of it which I, as her younger sister frequently take the mick out of, but I do see...I guess that's the point. What business leader wouldn't want their people coming to work enthusiastic and driven about the purpose of what that organisation is fulfilling.

Phil: Yeah and that is a lot of the narrative though isn't it, if you think about the popularity of Simon Sinek and his work you think about the, Victor Frankl and his book, The Purpose of....

Jo: One man's search for meaning.

Phil: That's it and if you think about a lot of the narrative, as much as I don't prescribe to the generalisations by demographic by age demographic, so millennials and gen-xs and all that jazz, as much as I don't subscribe to that, what I do see very commonly in the workplace is organisations that are aiming to articulate their reason for being beyond we want to make profit. So it is not just about we want to make as much money for the shareholders or as much money for the directors or as much money as possible, it is about we are also doing it for this reason and the aim then is to try and get people to be, as you said earlier on, intrinsically motivated to come to work. To be intrinsically motivated to be in the workplace and what that is then doing is, it's creating an emotional connection. So the moment someone feels connected to the business you are making an emotional connection and therefore people are doing emotional work and they will do emotional labour so in terms of your definitions earlier on. Emotional labour is the work I have to do to perform my job so this is where an organisation says that our values are be positive, be honest, be supportive, be collaborative. What the organisation is saying is these are the behaviours and therefore the associated emotions that we need. So for example, if I tell you that I'm not going to deliver the work that

you have asked me to deliver because I think it is a waste of effort and energy and it is not a project that I want to do, they can say well hang on a minute, our value is be collaborative and you are not being collaborative, you're not working with me. So I then have to do some emotional labour. So I have to find a way of telling you that I am not going to do what I am going to do and still be upholding of the company values that are written on a wall and so on and so forth and then at the same time I got to do some emotion work where I have to work with and regulate how I feel about my work, my colleagues, myself, my workplace, my team and all of those sorts of things as well and I agree with you in that, what then happens is if you display emotion that doesn't fit with what the organisation wants you to portray there is no way, or means of dealing with that in the workplace. You might find ways of dealing with that outside of work or you might find ways of dealing with that in yourself but there is the opportunity to sit down and say, I am really annoyed today, I am really upset today, I am really anxious today because those aren't things that organisations say they want. They say they want people that are happy and positive or whatever that is.

Jo: Can do attitude.

Phil: Yeah.

Jo: 100% all the time, everyday this is how we are.

Phil: Yeah.

Jo: Which isn't humanely possible.

Phil: I really like Jo's metaphor in high-vis jackets and appropriate footwear to get us thinking about the requirements of us as individuals, as managers, as employers, as organisations to think about the emotional and mental health and safety of people within the workplace. Now if I link this back to James' emotional regulation families that he talked about earlier on, so both with his work and I think with what Jo is talking about here they have taken a very individual centred focus to it. So how do I as an individual work with my emotions? How do I regulate my emotions? Any of those families that James talked about earlier on whether they be situational, the attentional, the cognitive or the response modulation families, any actions that we take within those for an individual are available for us in the workplace. I think what Jo's talking about though is this idea of how do we as individuals, managers, organisations and so on, how do we equip and support other people with regulating their emotions. How do we provide the opportunities to do that and by not doing so that puts all of the onus back on the individual and if I then link it back to Sarah Jane's work and think about what emotions are appropriate or can be displayed in particular context, it maybe that actually what we are encouraging in the workplace is for most people, or the experiences that people have, need to be worked within a response modulation way and in particular we think about Sarah Jane's examples and it is not just about SJ's examples, for me I see this in many, many other work places that I work with, the fact that we need to not show how we feel sits in that response modulation and in particular it sits within the suppression subfamily of it and this was one of the areas that I asked James about when I interviewed him for the podcast so we are going to go back to James now and we are going to talk about what the research tells us about using response

modulation and suppression and in particular versus a different approach. In this example we are going to talk about a cognitive change or a cognitive reframe.

James: Thanks Phil, so I think the punch line here is that not just my lab but hundreds of labs around the world have been exploring this issue because emotions are so important to our lives. We really want to know how to make the most of them. People have been really excited and I think you know this but to share this with your listeners. There are now literally every year tens of thousands of papers on emotion regulation trying to understand these processes. So it has been a really, really exciting period in the past couple of decades as people have really dug in and tried to figure out some of these questions that we are addressing today. I think my starting point was a very simple idea so in this process model of emotion regulation that we just talked about with these four basic strategies. My thought was a simple one which was if you can catch something early on so that you can, at the very beginning, where you are deciding what situation to get exposed to, or how to modify a situation that seems to me like a higher leverage position to be in than all the way at the end of the cycle. These response modulation strategies, we made the prediction, a very simple prediction that the earlier you go in general in this so called process model, the more effective the strategies would be and so to start out our research now several decades ago, what we did was we compared the cognitive strategies with the response modulation strategies and in particular what we did is we looked at one form of cognitive change which we called re-appraisal and I'll explain what I mean by that in just a second. And we compressed the re-appraisal with one form of response modulation which we called expressive suppression so we wanted to take two specific strategies that we knew people used in real life. The re-appraisal is where you try to think differently about, and the example I gave a moment ago, your kid's misbehaviour at the dinner table or your colleague's thoughtless playing loud music or talking in a loud way in the next cubicle over. Re-appraisal is, can I change the way I would naturally think about this in a way that would make me feel better. So that is re-appraisal and its cognitive change because it involves changing the cognitions that are the engine for making you feel a certain emotion and we can trust that re-appraisal, this type of cognitive change with expressive suppression which is a type of a response modulation and that's where you just try to not show what you are feeling so that someone who's watching you might not know you are feeling anything at all. So what we did feel in these early studies is we brought our participants into the laboratory and we then elicited emotion, we made them emotional by showing them short film clips that we had in other studies, pre-tested to make sure that they generally make people emotional and so we showed them some short film clips and we randomly assigned participants either to just watch the films, that was our control condition. So they did whatever they wanted. Just responded naturally or we randomly assigned our participants to try to reappraise, or to think differently in a way that would make them feel calmer. That was our reappraisal condition or we randomly assigned them to expressive suppression. That is to say, just act in a way so that someone watching you wouldn't know you were feeling anything at all and what we found Phil from that study and what other people have replicated again and again and again is that the people and the suppression conditions, so that's the response modulation, end of the line condition, they were able to look cool, they suppressed their behaviour but that didn't help them feel better at all. Inside their experience was just as intense as it would have been if they didn't suppress at all. So it didn't help them feel cool and physiologically this is the key point, they had not just the same

response as if they weren't regulating, they had a substantially increased physiological response so that effort associated with suppression made them look cool, did not make them feel cool and it actually increased their blood pressure and other aspects of their cardiovascular response compared to either of the other two groups. So suppression, we are not saying we should never suppress, but suppression is pretty costly so you got to use it strategically. Now let's compare that to reappraisal. Reappraisal which is this type of cognitive change. There people are also able to engage their strategy but there they not only looked cool so when we coded the video tape records we found that they showed less behaviour than the people in the watched condition. They also reported feeling better, so unlike the suppression condition where they looked cool and didn't feel any better at all these people who were reappraising looked cool and felt cool and a number of studies that we've started to do brain imaging studies using functional magnetic resonance imaging, what we find is that people in a reappraisal condition that are now more than one hundred neuro imaging studies particularly focused on reappraisal, we find the way that people are able to look cool and feel cool is that they are turning down using prefrontal cortical conditions to turn down reactivity in these emotion generative regions of the brain so it's a very deep process. If you really re-think what you are experiencing that can really, really have a powerful emotional impact. So this has lead people to be quite excited about the possibility, the different strategies could have very different consequences and now people have done what's called meta-analysis and that is just the idea, instead of doing one study at a time if there have been enough studies you can actually take all those studies and gather them together and ask if you look across all of the studies that have been done, let's say on the effects of suppression or reappraisal across all of the studies what do we find and the findings that I have just described from our early studies from two decades ago seem to be very very consistent with dozens and dozens of other studies that have been done.

Now Phil I want to be clear that even though that study and now dozens and dozens of other studies suggest that re-appraisal maybe more powerful than suppression that doesn't mean re-appraisal always works or is always helpful. So just like we ask the question about whether emotions, not whether emotions are always helpful or harmful but under what conditions or when are they helpful or harmful same thing here. So we need to ask the question under what conditions are these forms of regulation helpful or harmful and so what we are finding is a nuance picture which is that in general re-appraisal and other strategies that come earlier in emotion generation are better than the response modulation but that doesn't mean we always can use reappraisal. If we are in a situation that's brand new, that's overwhelming emotionally we're not going to be able to re-think it and so people just have to go to something else. Let's say to an attentional strategy, so Phil that is a quick summary of some of our core findings and I think the punch line here, that's really important to me is that there are different strategies. There are very different ways to regulate our emotions and that some of them are going to be more effective for some people and some circumstances than others, so the smarter we can be about emotion regulation and it's appropriate application the more helpful we can be, not just to ourselves but as you pointed out to other people as we try to help them with their emotions as well.

Phil: Now I find that really interesting in the effects, the physical health effects, the mental and relationship health effects that suppression versus other approaches can have so that for me is

something that I really want you to think about for yourself, for your teams, for your workplace in terms of what is the overt or the covert, the explicit or implicit way that it would appear as though emotions are to be regulated and managed within the workplaces that you work in or work with and then thinking about the long-term effects that then has. So we link back to SJ's findings on burnout, we go back to what both Jo, SJ and Cliff talk about in their episodes around the importance of having an opportunity to talk and share and explore and discuss and work with the feelings that we have in the workplace and the crucial role that that has yet is often lacking or not available to people and I think what I am hoping, the overall story arch I suppose I am hoping to tell here is that emotions and emotional intelligence are incredibly complicated. They are small words that mean an awful lot and one of the terms that we haven't really explored yet is that emotion intelligence one and it differs from emotions because emotions are discreet or emotional theory would suggest that emotions are discreet things where actually the emotional intelligence is bringing in an awful lot of other areas together and can be more complex. Let's head over to our episode with Cliff where I ask him to define what emotional intelligence is? I've just said is it the classic two by two that we have talked about so far in minoration for this episode and will pick up the conversation there.

Phil: OK. We've talked about self-awareness and we've also got in the classic Goleman two by two grid awareness, self-awareness and self-management and then awareness of others and "other-management" for want of a better phrase. I guess that is probably one of the most common model or framework around emotional intelligence but one of the challenges I guess I have with that two by two and emotional intelligence in general is that those two words make up (my listeners cannot see how wide my arms are going) this massive variety and breadth and depth of stuff that has all been kind of pulled together in this two by two. So what is your working definition of emotional intelligence if you have one?

Cliff: You've probably captured it with what you've just said there by describing the two by two grid and so whether it's Jack Mayer or Peter Salovey who did a lot of work with Caruso on the MSCEIT model which your listeners may have heard of (they worked hard on an ability model and they had the four branch model) and then you described Daniel Goleman who did a lot of work publishing and bringing this into the public arena around the two by two metrics of self-awareness and self-management, being aware of others and managing the interaction with them. If you incorporate those four corners of that two by two grid into a sentence, you're not far off a definition that most people would accept. However many of the definitions are not comprehensive enough because, and I know this is dear to your heart as well, to judge competence whether you take the ability framework or the trait descriptive when it comes out later, if you are judging the emotional intelligence of an individual, then I would suggest that is impossible unless you can get to a decision on the appropriateness of their behaviour or thinking in context and with a goal. So unless you know that goal if you don't have any information about the context, what is going on around them, where they come from, their culture, their background and the other persons, unless you know the intricacies of the micro context of the interactions that they are exchanging (having a discussion or a disagreement) and if you don't know the macro context about their values and beliefs and their culture and what they might be bringing to the table in their invisible rucksack, then if you've not got any way of ascertaining and bringing that onto the table, to judge whether someone is behaving appropriately you'd be guessing. So that is what the challenge for assessing emotional

intelligence is. First of all, you need a framework that respects culture, that brings culture into play and all the wider issues which we just call context. Nothing happens in a vacuum and context must feature. Unfortunately, there are about six or seven popular models now with assessment tools around emotional intelligence and many of them neglect the context and many of them also don't respect goals. What is the goal of the interaction? My goal with you isn't always pro-social. If I'm a poker player, I want to beat you. I don't care if you're hurting and you lose money. That phrase could cause concern to someone and therefore that brings another thing to light which is a problem for the models: they are contaminated with value laden or role laden aspects. Daniel Goleman's was designed for leadership. If I wanted emotional intelligence for me and my wife then there is no leadership there, we are equals. Well, I would say that. My wife Helen might say she is the boss. But the leadership is a contaminant. If we want a pure generic model, if we are striving for the equivalent of an IQ model which is generic and widely applicable then we need an EQ model which has got the same clarity and even (this is not going to be popular) if the intent of the model is not pro-social and to do with wellbeing.

Phil: I wanted to ask because it pulls together an awful lot of what we wanted to explore already in this special edition. It talks about context and the importance and how that shapes lots and lots of different things, it talked about goals and how that is part of the context but then those goals also shape what may or may not be helpful in a particular situation and then finally brings in the aspect that we hadn't really talked about yet which is this pro-social view of emotions and emotional intelligence and I think that's a risk if we just limit ourselves to think about emotions and emotional intelligence in that pro-social way. For us to ignore the ways that individuals approach what they do without thinking about the context, without thinking about their overall goals, without thinking about whether there is a pro-social or anti-social agenda that sits behind it is variable that I think is often overlooked and we need to bring into the discussion and the exploration of emotions and emotional intelligence because humans do bad stuff and humans do silly stuff as well and the use of emotions and emotional intelligence in those anti-social ways are important. In the workplace we have issues with bullying, we have issues with grooming, we have issues with gas-lighting, we have issues with people breaking the law in different ways and if you are well versed and you are emotionally intelligent your ability to use those skills in both a pro-social and an anti-social way, so whether you want to call it the dark side of emotional intelligence or whatever that is, I think we have to start to bring that into the discussion. We have to start to bring that into how do we equip people to be able to work with their own and other people's emotions in that way or in those ways when both others around you may have pro-social but they may also have anti-social agendas on there as well. Well that was a happy note to end on, wasn't it? So let me pull it together then. There are lots of different variable aspects and elements to emotions whether that be what they are, how you regulate and work with them, how they manifest themselves in individuals, in relationships, in teams and the purpose of this episode today was to bring four different points of view on the world of emotions and emotional intelligence and bring them together with some wider commentary I guess from me about what I think that means for us as individuals, for people that work with others as human beings as a whole I guess in terms of emotions and emotional intelligence are really complex areas and we need to, I think have a broader view, perspective and discussion on their role in individuals, in teams and the workplace as a whole.



Thank you very much for listening to this special edition of the podcast. We've not done one before so it would be good to know what you think. You can either contact me @philwillcox on Twitter [hello@emotionatwork.co.uk](mailto:hello@emotionatwork.co.uk) or you can leave us a review on iTunes, Podbean, Overcast or wherever you get your podcasts from. Thanks very much for listening and I will see you soon.