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SPEAKERS

Laura, Will, Jemma

Jemma 00:02

So Hello, and welcome back to another VTT podcast session, you may notice that we're one person short. So I'm joined by Will and Laura. And but Catherine isn't with us today. Umm she's gotten tied down with other things that hasn't been able to make it. But she'll be back with us next week.

Laura 00:22

So, today, we have the pleasure of all we had the pleasure of listening to a podcast suggestion from Laura. So I'm gonna hand over to Laura to tell us all about this super interesting podcast. Thanks, Jemma. So we listened to work life with Adam Grant. And the episode that we listened to was when work takes over your life. So it was all about work life balance, and how to set healthy boundaries. One of the first concepts that was introduced was this idea that there's a distinction between segmentors and integrators. So segmentors they keep their work life very separate. And there's clear boundaries between work and life and integrators that aren't really any boundaries. And it's all one big fuzzy thing. So to start us off, I would really be interested in finding out whether you to see yourself as more segmentors or more integrators. Maybe Gemma, you can you can answer first.

Jemma 01:29

Yeah, sure. So I found it a little bit. Well, hard to determine, like where I sit on the spectrum. And I think there probably is a spectrum because there's some of us who are completely segregated, who can just start and leave work at the same time every day and separate the two. And there were probably some people who is completely blurred, so they could be working at two o'clock in the morning because they can't sleep. Or, you know, there's kind of no limits between what they do. And then there's some of us in the middle. So I think I may be fit somewhere between the middle and a segregator. So I do you find it quite easy to switch off, turn my phone off, ignore work, not go back to my desk at the end of the day. But there are times where I'll dip in and out. So it's not completely concrete.

Laura 02:18

What about you, then Will?

Will 02:20

I completely agree with Gemma. And I think there is a spectrum and we all sit somewhere on that line. For me, it depends on the job I'm doing. In the past, I used to work as a teacher. And it was very easy for me to segment as a teacher, I would go to the office to do my lesson planning. And then I would go to the classroom, I would teach. And then I would go home, hang up my badge. And I'm out of work. And it was very easy to do that. Now I'm working in more of a creative role. And sometimes it's six o'clock at night or seven o'clock at night, even on the weekends, and Laura and I, we're talking about the work and we're talking about all the ideas that we have. And we find it's more difficult to segment and Laura raised an interesting point that if we did segment, it's more difficult to get interested in the work. I think that's that's a really good point that it depends on the work that you are doing. And it's this is the whole idea of the engaged workaholic, now if you love your job, and it almost feels like it isn't a problem when you're constantly talking about work. I think on that spectrum, I see myself as an integrator, trying to be a segregator.

Laura 03:42

I find it quite difficult sometimes to switch off, just because I get really interested in in work, especially now that it's more and more of a creative role. But I'm trying to set boundaries. And the way I'm trying to set boundaries is kind of having physical boundaries. So I'll try to maybe put on a work shirt and I'll have my my office area. And when Will and I were talking about this, I realised that I have. So when recently we had to fill out this checklist about whether our workplace is appropriate for like health and safety

reasons. And one part of that was about the office chair, whether you had like an ergonomic chair, and I have a standing desk because I don't have an ergonomic chair because it just doesn't fit in it and I'm standing anyway. But the thought of getting a work chair made me really really upset because then I felt like then I have this chair in my living room and it's work and I can't sit on the chair and enjoy the chair because it's it's the company's chair. And I got I got really upset about that thought. And I think it's really silly, but I think that's what it was. It was me trying to segment at least the physical space, even though mentally I'm fully integrated.

Jemma   05:05

So that that makes me think of a couple of things. So like, just bringing back to a point that Will said about the fact that you're both married, so you will sit at home and you'll chat about work after work. So does that make? Does that make segregating more difficult? Because? Because you work together, or do you think that? Like, does that play into the Blurred Lines of things?

Laura   05:29

I think it definitely does. When we don't work at the same company, we don't talk about work that much. And previously, I was working in software development. And if I tried to speak to Will about it, I wasn't very successful. Yeah, so it was it was a lot easier to segregate that and to segment that. And now I think we speak about work quite a bit more, but we're trying to kind of like set these boundaries. And some days were more successful than other days. And I think this kind of leads into the next topic, which was the this idea of having an engaged workaholic versus an unhappy not alcoholic. Workaholic not alcoholic? Which is worse? Let's not dive into that topic. So with this engaged, workaholic, they love their job. And do you think that this justifies workaholic tendencies then is this is it okay? If I get really into my job? Is it okay? If there are no boundaries? And I'm working until 2am in the morning?

Jemma   06:49

Will, I'll let you answer.

Will   06:52

Okay, I think for a short period of time, it's fine. When I first started at VTT, I was in a new role, I wanted to learn as much as possible. So I spent my weekends both Saturday and Sunday, on Udemy and Skillshare. And over platforms really trying to improve my skills.

And I did this for I think longer than a month. And then you can start to get tired, and it's nice to have a break. One thing that I really love that I find so enjoyable is taking out our camper van, Laura and I have a camper van. So if we can go away for the weekend, if we can park up in nature, preferably without signal, we can completely disconnect from work and we can relax. I think it's fine to spend some weekends if you want to learn if you want to study on different courses that you don't have the time to do during work hours. I don't think that's a problem. For me, it's becomes a problem if I do this consistently over and not so extended, but over a longer period of time.

Jemma 08:01

Yeah, so I guess there are some similarities for me. So a bit, the biggest challenge for me right now is that in all of the jobs I've ever had before, I've been actively discouraged from working outside of work hours, you know, like putting extra effort in and working overtime. But with this role, because it is learning and development, it is something creative, it is something that people can easily be passionate about, I'm certainly very passionate about learning. There is a kind of a blurred line between when you are learning for your own personal development and learning for work, because it's pretty much the same role. But yeah, I guess it's challenging because like the guy, Adam mentioned in the podcast, for some people, it genuinely makes them super happy to be working all the time to be working all hours under the sun, because it's something that they're really passionate about. And it doesn't always become an issue because I think it comes down to your lifestyle. So if you do have a family, and you want to be an active part of your family, then maybe you would become that unhappy workaholic, because you're missing out on valuable time. But if you're a single professional, and that's not the lifestyle you're looking for, then maybe it is kind of justified to be a workaholic, if it makes you happy.

Laura 09:26

I think another example from the podcast was that if the leadership works really long hours, that that then kind of sets this example and the expectation that the rest of the team also has to do that. And I'm wondering whether this doesn't just apply to the leadership, but like, for example, if I decide one day I'm gonna just work until 10pm every every day, I've got to put a lot of extra effort in what How does that change the expectations for the rest of the team? Am I doing something bad there if I put in more effort because it somehow puts pressure onto other people.

Jemma 10:09

In the podcast, they mentioned how it how it was interesting that segregators were less

accepting of what's the term that we used for people with blurred lines just reminded me,

L Laura 10:22

Integrator,

J Jemma 10:23

Integrator That's right. So segregators, we're less accepting of segregate of integrators, whereas integrators were far more accepting of segregators. So I guess it depends on your work dynamic. If you have lots of people who are segregators on one person that's an integrator, then you might have a cultural issue on your hands. Whereas if you've got a mix and a bit of a blend, and it's very flexible, which is very much like VTT, we're quite flexible and understanding, I don't think it necessarily becomes an issue.

L Laura 10:50

The other example that was mentioned in the podcast was Arianna Huffington, which is, was the co-founder of the Huffington Post. And she suffered from burnout in 2007. And she self identifies as as an engaged workaholic. But she now sees that if she takes time to relax, and to kind of switch off a bit, she actually loves her job even more. And she has like a few tricks of how she does that with, like an evening routine or setting an intention in the morning. Do you have any tips like that? Do you do anything to kind of keep that work life balance any little routines or rituals that you do?

J Jemma 11:39

Oh, I was gonna let Will go.

W Will 11:41

I have been quiet because nothing really comes to mind. I think it's more difficult when you're working virtually. So you have my separate office space here, which I only sit in when I'm working. But in the morning, I open my laptop. In the Design Studio, we have our stand-up. So I stand-up. It's What work did i do yesterday? What will I work on today? And do I have any blockers that I need help for from my colleagues or manager. So I guess that's can be a bit of a ritual. But apart from that, I can't really think of a strong ritual. I mentioned earlier, when I stopped working, when I was teaching in person, I would take off my name tag when I came into the house. And right by the door, I had a hook where I could put it and then I was home.

Laura 12:34

That's kind of like the story with the firefighter who had to shower before he could speak to his wife because yeah, to like, cleanse himself off of work.

Will 12:45

No not too extreme, though, just taking off my name tag, but

Laura 12:50

same idea. Same

Will 12:52

idea. Definitely.

Jemma 12:54

I mean, mine are quite similar to, to the ones mentioned in the podcast, which is, I'm in my spare room now. And but I used to have a separate office. So whenever I was finished, at the end of the day, I'd shut the door and not reopen the door, it was a sort of closed door policy, I'm not going to go back and work after I've closed the door umm have a work phone, which how I turn off my laptop. If I would rather stay an extra half an hour an hour late to complete all of the tasks, then come back to them at a later stage. So that there is that divide, even if I'm working a little bit later, and kind of dividing the time so that that part of the day is done. And now I'm on to sort of my separate life, my home life.

Will 13:39

I think that's a very interesting point Gemma and I use for where I worked last as an online teacher, I had to do lesson reports. And on Friday, I could either do my lesson report straight away, or I could wait until Monday and I could do them early Monday morning. If I chose to wait until Monday all weekend I'm thinking about these lesson reports. If I did them straight away, I could switch off better, I could relax a lot more and further enjoy my weekend.

Laura 14:15

I think that that's a really good point. If you feel like you've got tasks open that are just like

looming in the background, it's very difficult to switch off. And something that I've been trying to do is at the end of the day to kind of write what I did, and what I would have to do the next day. And I noticed that when we're really really busy. And I don't actually have time to do that because I already maybe had to stay a bit longer to finish a task and then it's just getting too late. I'll just shut down the computer. I find it very difficult to stop thinking about work. If I don't get it because then I feel like I'm forgetting something or there's this big problem maybe tomorrow, where it's just the simple task of writing down Okay, tomorrow. I'll Do this, this and this. It makes it so much easier to then kind of like, stop thinking about it.

Jemma 15:07
it consolidates everything in one place for you. So you then can get it out of your head onto the paper. And that's done and dusted. I can worry about it another day.

Laura 15:14
Yeah, exactly. Um, so something else that was mentioned in the podcast is, and I think we talked about this already a little bit this always being connected. Gemma, you said, you just switch off your work phone. So this doesn't sound like it's a big problem for you. I guess. Now with things like LinkedIn, it sometimes becomes a bit difficult as well, to decide what is working, what isn't? Do you feel that this always being connected is causing stress for you.

Jemma 15:52
So this is one of the things that I struggle with, because I'm quite disconnected as a person. So this, I kind of have the opposite problem, which is that I'm really disconnected from my friends, my family, because I just leave my phone, turn it off, not message people back for a few days. I'm one of those friends. And because I like to get into projects, I think they kind of mentioned it in the podcast where you can get so lost in something that you forget about time and space. It's kind of like this meditative space when you get into a workflow. Well, I kind of find that outside of work when I'm working on projects, like at the allotment, or I'm tending to my house plants, which I'm sure you probably share with me, Laura. So yeah, like I have the opposite problem where I just I'm so disconnected that people are shouting at me like why are you not messaging me back? Why are you not talking to me, and I'm literally the worst at posting on Instagram or Facebook, they call me Instagran basically

Laura 16:51

We're in the same club. I'm so I'm so bad at responding to messages. And actually, it makes me really happy when someone takes like a week to respond to one of mine, because then I feel less guilty about taking so long.

Jemma 17:04

Yeah, me too.

Laura 17:06

So will you then feel like you struggle to disconnect? Or is this something that you also find? Easy?

Will 17:15

I think I'm a massive precrastinator. Say a lot of the time when we have meetings, I'll be in the chat box. And if I think of something, I will send something straightaway. If somebody sends me a message, I either reply straight away or I reply in three weeks. So there's no in between it's not like I'll do it in two hours, either straightaway at this moment, or it's come wait.

Jemma 17:40

Yeah. on that, Will. I think because we're procrastinators, or because we don't reply, we are quite impulsive sometimes as well. Like, I don't know if you agree, Laura, but sometimes your message me and our message like that, I think in work, it's a bit different because we have this expectation that we need to reply, but in my home life, no, it's either straightaway or never.

Laura 18:02

I definitely respond to work emails and teams messages. I think with personal stuff, it's because you feel like you can wait. Whereas if you get a message on teams, and then you just don't respond like I would be worried that like, are you gonna think I'm not working? Am I really here, so I feel I feel like with with teams and an email, I always respond. But yeah, if you send me a WhatsApp message, be prepared to wait a few days

Jemma 18:31

I'm always shocked when you put any messages in the whatsapp group. And now I know why.

Laura 18:38

It takes a lot of mental energy for me to write like a message. I don't know. I think I think Yeah, no.

Will 18:47

And for me, I I haven't put any messages in the whatsapp group for the last couple of weeks. Because I broke my phone two weeks ago, I took four or five days to order a new phone. And I still haven't installed WhatsApp.

Laura 19:04

But you've sent WhatsApp mass messages on my phone as me.

Will 19:09

Yeah. So I am engaged. I can get the messages from Laura, if something happens. I know what's going on. So I have this advantage. Yes.

Laura 19:18

I'm so going back to teams messages and having to respond quickly at work. Do you feel like this is kind of cutting your day into small pieces? And maybe we'll you can answer this first? Do you think that you are lacking this on interrupted deep work time because you're constantly having to read and respond to messages.

Will 19:49

So at the Virtual Training Team, specifically in the Design Studio, we're a new team and we're a young team and we're really trying to figure things out and to work in the most efficient way. At the moment, we have a daily standup at 9:30 in the morning, it should last for 15 minutes. But sometimes it lasts for 20 or 30 minutes, I start work at 8am. And before we did stand up, I had this uninterrupted block of time till about 11 or 1130, when I need to answer teams messages, where I could be very productive and get a lot of work

done, I think stand-up the way we had it was very beneficial when we set it up. Because when we set it up, we were quite behind on tasks, we had workshops that needed to be delivered in a week or in a few days. And we had to communicate, we had to know whether we can help others as a team. Now, it's not so important. An idea that we have is virtual co working, where we're all the CO working together. But virtually, we have 25 minutes of work followed by a five minute chat or five minutes of yoga. And we're actually going to try this out for the first time tomorrow. But I think this might be a better replacement or a more efficient replacement to stand up. Another idea I'm very interested in, I think it was mentioned in this podcast as well. It's quiet mornings, so perhaps two or three mornings a week, we don't log into teams, we log in at 12 o'clock, or It's one o'clock in the afternoon. But the morning, it's quiet, we don't have any meetings, we can just sit down and get some creative work done.

Jemma   21:47

So I really like that idea of like having an agreed quiet time in the morning. I think that's a really great way of sort of decluttering on conversations. And I think there's a couple of things that springs to my mind here. So the first one is like, do we rely too much on ms teams for communication, because there are things that happen, or that we discuss in teams that are really important. And maybe someone isn't in that day, or maybe someone's been in a really important meeting and doesn't get time to catch up on the chats. Like maybe we should have more email conversation when it comes to things or topics that are super important. So that we can allow people the space and the time that if they want to have a quiet morning and switch off from teams, or, you know, they've gone Do Not Disturb for the day that they don't feel like they're missing out, you know, like FOMO, this new cool phrase that I'm learning and, and then equally like we have that dynamic happening in the sales team as well. So one of my colleagues, she is kind of struggling to keep on top of her workload, because of all the different distractions that happened through the day and all the meetings that she's getting pulled into. And it's it's, it's interesting that after I listened to the podcast, I also saw another gentleman on LinkedIn, who was struggling with the same issue. And he was struggling with all the distractions and finding that he wasn't having enough time to work. And instead he's spending most of his time meeting. Umm so it's really tricky balance to strike, I think. But little things like what you've mentioned Will as coping mechanisms like quiet times in the mornings, or do not disturb days, or I think we're we're starting to find that rhythm and, and initiate that feedback. If that makes any sense at all. I felt like I just waffled for ages.

Will   23:40

I agree completely. I think that makes a lot of sense Jemma. And I think that is a fine line.

One of our colleagues, she used to have Do Not Disturb for the entire day, except one hour at the end of her day. So say if something was important, we want to send her a message she won't read it until 2pm. And sometimes she moved this and have her day from two to 3pm till one till 2pm. So you need to contact her between that one hour. But we are a team. It's not just about getting your work done. It's about helping others, communicating with others to help them to innovate, to create new products to really build this rapport and work together. So I agree, I think maybe a quiet morning or one day a week where you're on Do Not Disturb. I think that might work. What we can't do, it's where we're on Do Not Disturb 90 or 95% of it. Yeah,

Jemma 24:42

a little bit extreme. I think that's the I'm avoiding.

Laura 24:46

I think that it's about about shared expectations. And I don't think it works if one person is always on Do Not Disturb and the rest of the team aren't. So if we started implementing and again And we're gonna, I think we're gonna try some of these things out in the design studio. Because I guess our job as well as the least, peopley, we don't really have to communicate. I mean, we have to communicate with clients sometimes and internally, but a lot less than everybody else.

Jemma 25:18

It's very hard task heavy, though, isn't it, you know, like, you've got some really important deadlines to, to work towards. So I can see why if you're, if you get distracted, even for like half a day, that's going to dis, I can't even think of the word disrupt everything that you have planned. And so probably plan making plan making plan making then happens if you get distracted over and over and over, and then you just end up not being productive at all.

Laura 25:46

Yeah, and we actually, I think only a few days ago, we finally caught up with a lot of the deadlines where we, we were not necessarily rushing, but we were finishing everything just in time. And a big reason for that was that there was a period where there were just so many meetings, and I'm a person after meeting, I need like five minutes to recover. And I'm my brain stops working afterwards. And I need to, I can't really get back into this deep work that quickly. And if my day gets caught into tiny pieces, then I end up really not

being productive at all. And for a while we tried. Well, and I we tried starting work really, really early. And like starting at 6am. It worked fantastic in terms of getting work done. But then I think we kind of had the same issue like that colleague who was on Do Not Disturb all the time, that people couldn't really get a hold of us when they needed us. So again, I think if everybody says Tuesday morning, quiet time, then we all know that. And we know that then at 12, we can speak to each other again. Whereas if it's just if everyone chooses their own quiet time, there might not be overlap. So I think that would be a bit problematic.

Jemma 27:05

Yeah, I agree. Actually, I think that's a really important point. Like if we're going to have quiet time within a team, it probably makes sense on a production level to actually have it at the same time so that everybody has a productive two hours. And then we can bother each other with all of our questions and our blockers. But I think your idea as well about the it's the Pomodoro technique that you're thinking about using aren't you, which is one I'm familiar with, with that originates from a tomato timer.

Laura 27:38

So is that something that you feel like works for you pomodoro sessions?

Jemma 27:43

I think it would work for me if I was more project orientated. So like at home, if I'm making something, it's great, because I'll just get lost in time and take a break for like two hours. So if I have that 20 minute, 25 minute stint, and five minute break, it works really well on projects. But because in sales, we spend so much time on the phone, and it's in meetings, it's kind of impossible, because a meeting can last anywhere from 15 minutes to an hour with a client. So we can't just sort of stop 25 minutes through, come back. It's just not logistically possible. But you can kind of make it work in our session. So like, I'm going to have a heavy hour of working and then take a five minute break. It kind of works in that way. Yeah, I

Laura 28:27

think that for me it It also depends on what task I'm doing. Obviously, with meetings, it doesn't work. But even we'd like more task based work is sometimes I feel like 25 minutes isn't enough time. And I want to do like I sometimes like to work in like a block of like two hours or something before I would consider taking a break just because if I stop and then

go back to it afterwards, I kind of like lost track of where I am. And then you lose time. Oh, yeah. So I think you have to be smart about which tasks you're using this technique for. And which tasks are better done in like more in blocks, I guess.

Jemma 29:10

Yeah. And I guess it doesn't have to be a solid 25 minutes, does it? You're right. It could be you know what, I'm really into the flow of this. I'm going to skip this five minute break and take 10 minutes in an hour or like, yeah, be smart with it.

Laura 29:22

I think it works quite well. We'd like if you have a lot of little tasks, like writing maybe some emails or at the moment, I have a lot of like projects open and I need to like tie up loose ends. So I'll use our pomodoro session tomorrow to do that. Because I don't need that two hour blocks, I think something like that. It could work. Well. I haven't actually heard Will's opinion about Pomodoro sessions. Is that something that works for you? Will,

Will 29:51

for me, it works. If I can't get into flow, if I can get into flow state if I'm very motivated to work on a specific big task, I don't need pomodoro. But there are some tasks that we enjoy less than over tasks. I think everybody's the same. There's some Task which tasks which report off or we try to cancel or try to push to other people because we don't enjoy them. I think pomodoro is a great way of forcing yourself and motivating yourself to do tasks that you need to do but don't want to, I think it's a great because you're there with over people as well. And perhaps they're also working on tasks, which they're not very motivated to complete.

Jemma 30:37

It will be really interesting to hear how you get on tomorrow on our next session. So you have to update us how you get on with your trial sessions.

Will 30:46

Yeah, we will do definitely. And if it does work, well, we want to roll this out company wide. So it will be an option, of course, we will have a group in teams and you can join it if you want to. Again, if you're in the flow state, or if you're on calls, and don't think it will work for you one time, it's not a problem. But if you have a task, you need to complete it, you don't

want to, I think it's a great way of forcing yourself to meet your deadlines to complete these tasks.

Laura 31:18

I think it's also my hope is that maybe eventually, if I was in this co working session, I could put myself on Do Not Disturb and ignore all other messages. But because it's a meeting link, and anyone can join, if something was an emergency, that person could come into that meeting and say, Laura, we need you. And kind of like pull me out of the co-working session. But it would kind of it would almost be like permission to ignore all messages because they know where you are. It's almost like replicating actually being in an office in some way.

Jemma 31:57

Yeah, well, I'm the the IT company that we work with, they do that, don't they? So they're constantly on teams on video. They're all on mute. And then if they ever need anything, they just turned themselves off mute and shout out and their co-workers helped them which I think is a wonderful idea if you've got capacity to do that is to is to create that virtual office space. Yes, I totally agree.

Laura 32:22

I don't know how I would feel about being on video the entire time though To be honest, because I think if I'm if I'm working I might be really weird position. I sit really weirdly on my weird chair. So I think I would probably turn off my camera in like the focus time and turn it back on for the breaks. I feel like otherwise, I feel like I'm being watched a little bit.

Jemma 32:46

Big brother Yeah, yeah,

Will 32:49

it's even just tiring. So if you're looking at the white.on your screen or you know, it's the, for me, I find it tiring and quite draining. If this was on for a few hours, say pomodoro. We want to do do this in two hour blocks. 25 minutes on five off, but for two hours, I think it will be quite draining for me. Even if I'm not looking at the camera, just by seeing the white dot.

Laura 33:17

I think there's this whole idea of of zoom fatigue. Where I can't remember what the explanation is. But I think it's something to do like you're feeling like everyone's staring at you. Because you're in a in a web conference and in normal life, like y'all need to really look at the person that's talking and not the one that's listening or something. I'm not sure there's there's an article somewhere out there that explains it much better. And Jemma, you are probably in the most meetings after all of us. Do you feel like this is something that you suffer from zoom fatigue? Do you feel like it's quite draining for you to be in those meetings all day? Or are you immune to this?

Jemma 34:04

Yeah, I guess it's like, like, it's similar to when in, in previous sales jobs, we used to do things like cold calling, which is where, you know, you get those sort of random people calling you on your telephone, they're trying to sell you something and you've got no they've got no reason to call, you've not given them permission to call. That's kind of what I used to do in some of my old jobs is you just pick up the phone call people see if they're interested in what you're selling, and days where you would call like 50 or 60 people. I'd go home and not want to talk to anyone, like I'd get fatigued from talking. I didn't want to talk anymore. But I don't think I have found that when it's online virtual meetings. I don't know if it's because it's more real and like with with VTT, it's far more of a warm environment when you're talking to customers. Customers are reaching out to us rather than us kind of reaching out to them. But I think if I was and also With VTT, we're very authentic, so we're allowed to be our authentic selves. Whereas with other organisations that I've worked with before, you kind of have to use those useful delusions like in customer service, what we touched on in the previous podcast, to pretend to be something that you're not. And that can be exhausting. Yeah, not with VTT. I think I enjoy every meeting.

Laura 35:24

Glad to hear that. But I think that's it's a really good point, actually, that with VTT, I think this is also something that I really enjoyed that we're allowed to kind of be ourselves. And we're acknowledging the fact that we're all at home. Previously, I was working as an online teacher, and we had students complain if there was like a dog barking or something like that. And one of the first things that Catherine said to me is that I should never apologise for a dog barking or if I have to go and open the door during a meeting to let a dog out in the garden that that's okay. And it's normal. And we don't have to worry about that. And that actually makes such a big difference mentally to me, that I don't have to panic when there's a dog barking. And I mean, I'll still put myself on mute because it is annoying. But I know I'm not going to get a complaint at the end of the

meeting because a dog barked. So I think Yeah,

Jemma 36:24
what do you think of stress levels of unnecessary expectations that were not real human beings? Are all robots lacking?

Laura 36:32
Yeah, definitely.

Will 36:35
I had one case in my last job where I spoke to a student and I spoke to him only on the telephone. And during this call, my call caught out twice, I lost internet two times for maybe five or six seconds, I had spoken to the students previously 30 or 40 times, and every time they rate the teacher at the end of the lesson, so he gave me a green tick, every time apart from this time, I got a red tick. And a red tick is very unhappy. Because my internet dropped out twice. I called him back straight away, but he lost maybe 20 or 30 seconds of engagement. It was very interesting, because the next time I spoke to the student, he complained about his internet. And he complained about he's he's getting a new internet installed. He has problems right now. He's having problems at his company because of that. And I mentioned very briefly, what's happening to me last time, I didn't mention that he gave me a red tick, what is just so he can see me as more of a human than a robot. I know, when you speak to somebody on the telephone is sometimes it can be difficult to make this distinction. And to see this person as a person with feelings and have their own technical difficulties. Again, the internet, I didn't switch the box off. It just happened.

Laura 38:08
I guess, in conclusion, sort of a lot of these stresses at work. I think we're kind of putting on each other by having very high expectations, whether it's the expectation that you're going to answer my email at five to five, or whether it's the expectation that we all have perfect internet and no distractions. And I think we can probably all make sure or be mindful of what kind of expectations we have of other people or what we communicate to other people to make sure that we're not stressing each other out any more than we need to.

Jemma 38:50

Yeah, adding additional anxieties. Absolutely. Well, this was a great podcast choice. Thank you so much, Laura, and thank you so much for listening. Bye, guys. Bye.