Speaker 1 (00:05):

["Everywhere You Go," by Tim Houlihan]

Kurt (00:05):

Welcome to Behavioral Grooves, my name is Kurt Nelson.

Tim (00:07):

and I'm Tim Houlihan. Given the strange and turbulent times that we're living through, Kurt and I decided to reach out to some of our favorite behavioral science researchers and practitioners to get their take on the novel coronavirus pandemic that is shaking the world. These special edition episodes. We'll explore a variety of different aspects of the crisis and our response to each of those aspects. Through a behavioral lens, we know that you may feel overwhelmed by the crisis already. It seems every news story, every social media thread, every phone conversation that we have is focused on some aspect of the pandemic right now.

Kurt (00:43):

While the news and updated information are essential, we're going to take a different tact. We want to try to understand the science behind our reactions and our behaviors and how science can help us cope and move beyond the current crisis. In each episode, we talk with a different behavioral science expert and get their best thinking on an aspect of the crisis. So sit back, take a deep breath and listen to our special series on behavioral science and the coronavirus pandemic.

Tim (01:12):

Liz Fosslien is head of content at HUMU, which combines people, science and machine learning to create breakthroughs on every people-centric measurement. Liz is also the co author and illustrator of no hard feelings, the secret power of embracing emotions at work. And by the way, she was our guest on episode 56. So welcome back to behavioral grooves. Liz.

Liz (01:33):

Hi Tim and Kurt. Great to be here.

Tim (01:35):

We are happy to have you. So Liz, you know, we're, we're talking about the coronavirus, uh, outbreak and the coven 19 epidemic and most importantly with you because you, you have done a ton of work around emotions in work and, and how those impact how we, how we perform, but also, you know, just the emotional aspect and, and fatigue and other things that happen sometimes in that. So we want to understand from your perspective, right? Um, how has this crisis impacted the emotions that we're feeling, uh, at this time? And, and particularly as, as we think about work and the way that we're working.

Speaker 3 (02:14):

Yeah, I think it's definitely an unprecedented time. Um, so many people are now working from home for the very first time, and then there's a whole group of people who can't do that and have to go like cashiers, um, pilots who still have to go do their job. And so I think there's an additional stress of just being concerned about like being around so many people, the risks involved with that, but still obviously

wanting to contribute to society, not totally breaking down at this point. Um, so I would say just like unsurprisingly to anyone, I'm sure peak stress, uh, and, and a lot of, I think it's not just, um, you know, I've, I've heard from some of my colleagues, my office has been working from home for about a week now and a lot of colleagues who have kids and spouses, it's like redefining what it means to have a workplace and what it means to like, have work hours. Um, so there's not only this like broad global uncertainty, but I think there's a lot of uncertainty even about like, okay, when am I actually going to be able to get my work done?

Speaker 4 ([03:17](#)):

Mm. Yeah. So talk about that a little bit more. How is that or why is that different for everybody working at home compared to when they were working in the offices?

Speaker 3 ([03:27](#)):

Yeah, so when you go into the office, I mean, there's so many differences and there's definitely small things you can do to make the transition easier. But the biggest one is you just don't have the sort of informal bump ins anymore. Right? So you can walk into a meeting, walking out of a meeting, running into someone in the bathroom, in the lobby, getting coffee, getting lunch, I'm swinging by someone's desk. There's just all these opportunities we have when we're in the same location to praise one another to share, you know, like, just quickly ask someone a question, catch up on our personal lives. Um, and I think we don't even realize how much we do that when we're together. And so now working from home, it just requires more effort into like reaching out, uh, setting up time at the beginning and end of each meeting to say like, how are you doing? What's going on? I've heard a lot of people actually have just started bringing pets and, and kids into video chat conferences. Um, so it's like, it's, this is inevitable. It's here, let's just have it be part of our lives and get to know each other on a personal level. Um, but just I think the, the sense of isolation, both from an emotional standpoint and from a productivity standpoint can be rough if also, if you've never done it before.

Speaker 4 ([04:42](#)):

Yeah. I think, you know, one of the things that is occurring is this idea that I thought you brought up really great is this people are re w we, we didn't notice the impact that we were just walking around and talking to people before. But now that it's gone, now that we don't have that opportunity, as you said, to bump in to people, right. We miss it. It's, it's one of those human factors that we as people, we, we like those social interactions, most of us, I will qualify that. We like those social interactions and we get energy from that and various different things. And so having, having not, you know, not really noticing the impact that that had to now having it be gone, I think, uh, could potentially have a, have a powerful impact on how we work moving forward in the future.

Speaker 3 ([05:33](#)):

Definitely. I mean, one interesting thing just to throw on quick fact that I've always loved Google specifically has done research or did research in the past around when people are standing in line in the cafeteria to get their lunch, how long they should be standing in line to encourage them to start speaking to random people and have these little interactions that maybe lead to innovation, lead to new relationships, lead to collaboration. So there's so much research that's been done around like these chance serendipitous encounters and the benefits that arise. And now we don't have, I mean, unless what we did at my work now that's all a bunch of ex Googlers. So we've created like a virtual water cooler, which is just a Google hangout that's always live. And if you're bored at any point in the day, you

can just pop in and there's usually a few people in there. So it's again, trying to continue this little serendipitous conversation thing. Um, but way harder and takes, takes a lot more um, effort and thought than it used.

Speaker 4 (06:33):

Yeah, you bring up an interesting thing like what Google study, so did, did they actually make their lines, they slowed down the, the, the lunch service so that people were standing in line for the appropriate amount of time. That's all I know. I know. Best buy here in, in, in Minneapolis when they built their headquarters, which was actually a long time ago, 10 15 years now. Um, but they built it such that all of the, the services, they had a four different wings, but all of the things that you had to get this from, you know, your lunch to coffee, even they didn't have coffee in the wings. They had it all in the central location to, to spur those random connections that you run in. And bump into people, uh, just for that. And so it's, it really is one of those aspects that I think is, is missing in, in this current work thing. When you know, everybody's working from home, we don't have those things. And you have to be, as you said, you have to be more purposeful about it. And even with setting up, like you, you said your, your virtual thing, you gotta you gotta actually plan to go out and do that different things. So it's, it sounds like the virtual water cooler is a really cool idea. What are some other things that companies could do to help bridge this gap that we have of intentionality?

Speaker 3 (07:49):

Yeah, so I think a lot of it is just, especially if you're a manager, I'm just setting up the time. I mean anyone can do this, but throwing, we've also done someone uh, on Friday afternoon through on like a virtual happy hour and it was like show up, wear a funny hat, you know, have a drink. Um, and so again, it's just about creating, cause you're, I think definitely I found myself sliding into this in the past few days is you just get into like efficiency mode cause you're at your computer, you have all this time for heads down work and so you just start like hammering away and so you're not taking breaks, you're not socializing. Um, and that's actually, it's like bad for your body. It's bad for your productivity in the long run you're going to burn yourself out. It's just not the best situation.

Speaker 3 (08:35):

So also making sure as an individual if you've, if it's been like three hours and you haven't done anything, just like reach out to someone and see if they want to do like an impromptu video chat. I found that people, especially now when times are so uncertain, people usually welcome the opportunity to talk, to get on video, to have that personal connection. So I think it's like creating more formal things, putting things on the calendar for your team or just really being thoughtful about reaching out and setting things up on a one on one basis.

Speaker 4 (09:05):

So we have to be more deliberate about those opportunities to connect and to engage socially with others where before it happened by happenstance often and now it needs to be much more deliberate and thoughtful and, and play it

Speaker 3 (09:20):

definitely. And one thing to add to that, um, that the research bears out and when it, when people have looked at remote work is that we tend to praise each other a lot less when we're working remotely. So it's, you know, again, it's the like, let's grab coffee and then on the way we're like, Oh, you did such a

great job in that meeting or I was so impressed by so-and-so. And you don't usually write that in an email or put it in Slack or whatever messaging program you're using. So remembering to emotionally proofread your messages, making sure that it's not just like a bullet point list of here's what you need to do, here's what I'm doing, here's the edits that you're still inserting. Thanks so much for pulling this together. I thought you were great in that meeting. Um, again, these things that don't normally go in emails, they need to go there now.

Speaker 4 (10:07):

Wow. I'm, I'm just, I'm just really feeling terrible about some of that. You'll be able to lose that reason. Hey Tim, by the way, you're doing a good job. I really appreciate you. You know the last interview we did man, you nailed it. It was awesome. Awesome.

Speaker 3 (10:25):

You can put these tips into practice right away.

Speaker 4 (10:27):

No, those are great though. I love the idea of emotionally proofreading your emails. I mean, cause we don't do that. We look for typos and we look for other things, but we don't think about, wow, I haven't really talked to these people. And so how am I emotionally connecting with them in this email? And again, I, I would assume it's not even just that thinking, but it's the idea of, Hey, how was your weekend? How's you know your grandma was sick? How is she doing? You know, your dog are those, even those little connecting things that, that are part of who we are as humans that we just, as you said, we get into efficiency mode and it's bullet point here and I can do really well. I can do a lot of work at home. Um, but I, but I'm missing out on all those other facets.

Speaker 3 (11:10):

Yeah. I love the point you brought up too about just like asking about someone's life. I think this is a time when we really don't have insight into like I spent last Friday my productivity was very low because we had the shelter in place order, I live in the Bay area and it was just like a lot of trying to coordinate getting food to elderly relatives and making sure they had enough food so they wouldn't have to go out. Um, and that's like not something that I shared widely at my company but also definitely like impacted my productivity. And so I think when you start meetings it's just a really important time not to dive in right away to the action items. And to start by saying it's just a quick check in, like how are, how's everything going? And then people can share as much or as little as they want. But it's nice to just acknowledge that this is an unusual time.

Speaker 4 (12:01):

Well, it's been, yeah, it's been interesting. And I wanted to talk about this because one of the things that I've noticed, and maybe it's, I hope it's not unique to me, but I, it may be, but the vast majority of my conversations have all started off with how are you, how are you responding to this crisis? And so it has been crisis, um, specific, right? So it's like, Oh, this has impacted me this way. This is that. And these are the different things. And then talking about, Oh, the spread of it and, and how, how it's going to impact us in the future in different things. But I don't think we necessarily go to the, the, the personal side to, to that degree. You know, there's a little bit of my kids are now at home and I'm talking about what it's like for them and some of that. But my question around that is, is there a point in your opinion where we can get to any emotional fatigue where we are just so worn out by all of the stress, all of the talking

about this that we just, it actually shuts us down to actually hearing more about these types of things, even if it is on a personal level.

Speaker 3 (13:07):

I mean, I, I experienced that yesterday when I put a ban on myself, only check the news 10 minutes a day. Um, cause I would just get sucked into the Twitter vortex of Dube. Um, I definitely think that I also, I think it's, it's people say this about grief that it sort of comes and goes in waves. It's not sort of a linear path and I think that will be true for the next, for the foreseeable future. I think people will be in different places at different times. And so the biggest thing I'd say is I think it's still good to check in and then it's good just to be conscious of if someone's like, Oh, everything's fine and they just don't want to talk about it, then just, you know, move the conversation along. Um, the check-in, it's not, it should never be forced. Like, let's get into this deep thing if the other person doesn't want to.

Speaker 3 (13:56):

Great. Um, on Slack too, that's how we primarily communicate. Um, on my team. You know, people have been posting funny means and pictures and photos with their pets and there are days when, you know, like when I was trying to get food for relatives, I just wasn't in the mood, but I also had empathy for them and I just said, I'm not going to check this channel. They, you know, I'm gonna it's totally reasonable that they want to have some lighthearted fun right now. I don't feel that, but it's fine and we're in different places and that might reverse in a week. And so just giving people the space to have feelings, both positive and negative. I think we're all going to go through a series of reactions.

Speaker 4 (14:37):

How do you think this is going to change the way that we work in the future?

Speaker 3 (14:42):

Yeah, it's fascinating. I don't know. My son, my one thing, this doesn't really have to do with work, but I would guess a lot of touch stuff will go to voice activated. So elevator buttons, I can see that there's a push for that to be voice activated. That's not work. But um, that seems good. And then in work, I don't know, I think probably a decent percentage of people will realize they can work from home, um, and maybe want that and employers might be more open to that in the future. Um, especially in the Bay, you know, thinking about living somewhere else where I can afford a house with a yard sounds pretty magical. Um, but then, you know, I think there's also, I know I have many extroverted friends who are very miserable right now. Um, so I don't, I don't think it's going to be like everything is remote. I think there's going to be, uh, some, some sort of maybe shift more towards being amenable to letting people work remotely and then also a greater appreciation for being in the office.

Speaker 4 (15:48):

Yeah, I think the, the greater appreciation for being in the office is an interesting piece of this because like you had mentioned earlier, we don't know what we miss until we no longer have it. And then some of those things that we miss, we wouldn't anticipate in advance. And so I think you're right. I think there's going to be this potential shift that more people can office out of the house and maybe do that on, on different days, but still understanding that, that need for social gathering and for that sense of community and team that you have when you have an office and various different pieces are around that. So I think all of those are really important aspects of this. Are there things that you have identified?

So I know we talked a little bit about some of these things of, uh, what you can do from officing out of the home to be more emotionally.

Speaker 4 (16:44):

Uh, well I would, uh, I guess that's a good way of putting it, uh, when you're officing from home, if you're not accustomed to this. I mean, I, I've office from home for 20 years and I realize that I've changed in those 20 years. I mean, I, I used to, when I started, I used to set up lunches and, and you know, specific times to meet people and now I've just become, I don't know, I must be an old grumpy curmudgeony man and an introvert because you don't seem to thank you, Jim. I don't think I need those as much, but I, I, you know, for those people who are just, uh, you know, newly into this, are there other things that they should be thinking about doing beyond, you know, some of the proactive, you know, reaching out to people that we talked about?

Speaker 3 (17:22):

Yeah. Um, I think one is to schedule time to move your body. Um, so again, because there's no one coming to talk to you, there's no one to maybe grab coffee with or you're not walking to a meeting. Um, the danger is just sitting in your chair for back to back meetings. And so making sure that you have half an hour, 15 minutes, um, there's something on YouTube called the seven minute workout that I really love, which is like pushups and all these different things, but just, it can be yoga, it can be jumping jacks, just making sure to have regular sort of physical activity breaks, um, and whatever feels comfortable to you. And then the other thing I'll say is really thinking through what your hours are going to be as an individual and as a team. So I think for teams it's important to come together and say, you know, especially if people have children or if there's, they're taking care of someone, like what are a few hours when we all will be available and responsive.

Speaker 3 (18:21):

And that might be from nine to 11 and two to five. But just agreeing on that as a team. And then, um, in the evening really trying, again, it depends on how you're moving your hours around, but once you're done with work, having some kind of routine that signals to you, I'm done with work because I think what often happens is we don't have this physical distance. We're not getting on a train and then we're in a different space and everything has changed. So it's very easy for it to be five and then you're like, Oh, I'll just check my email and then suddenly you're never really disengaging. Um, so, uh, yeah, having some kind of rich the wind down, right.

Speaker 4 (19:00):

You mean people actually have like a stop time at work and the regular I didn't know that.

Speaker 3 (19:08):

Yeah, I think it goes, so I've, I've, I've given this piece of advice to a few people and then some of the response has been like, I have a harder time doing anything. I don't need a Y, I need outfit getting started. Um, so yeah, I think it, different things come naturally to different people.

Speaker 2 (19:28):

Yeah. It reminds me of a comment that I heard related to ongoing Wars that we have throughout the world. Like if we don't, if we don't ever stop having a war, how will we really know what a peace is? And if we don't have peace, how do we know what war is? And so this gets to the question about work. If

we're not going to actually stop working, how do we know what work is? Like if we don't have downtime, we don't have time with our family, uh, to actually get away from work. What, how do we define what work is? I think that that's, I'm sorry, I just go to a instantly philosophical,

Speaker 4 (20:00):

he can't just dive in deep there. That's okay. Liz, you bring up a really good point because I know for myself, I, I've had to, because I've been doing this a home office thing for 20 plus years and, and there are times I know specifically when I was younger and, and whatever, it would just, you would just go, you would just keep going and yeah, you'd stop for dinner and then, you know, it's like so easy, you know, my office is right there. It's right over there. I can just go in, I just come check those emails and then, you know, four hours later it's midnight and you're going, what the hell happened? Uh, and, and we can so easily just do that without being purposeful or thinking about it. And then you just, that lays in even more. So all of a sudden that emotional aspect be, so now you've, you've done that four hours of work, you get less sleep, you have no time to down, you know, just have some downtime and, and to decompress from everything else.

Speaker 4 (20:57):

So, so those are really good, really good insights. Um, so do you have, do you have anything that you do to signify to yourself? I'm not gonna go into the office, or what routines have you felt that, you know, that's a really good question. I don't know if I have routines. I do have a wife and kids that um, you know, bug me, uh, in the right way sometimes. No, but, but I, I did notice that once I, once I had a family, it was, it was much different than when it was just me and my wife. Right. And that was where it just kind of, we would go off and, and, and, and it would just be kind of isolated, kind of doing this. But with kids, you need to actually spend that time. So, so I have actually just got to the point where I, what I do, and I don't know if this is a routine so much, but when I'm done, like when I kind of hit that five o'clock, you know, sometimes four o'clock kind of things that we would, you know, it's shutdown time and, and then it's kind of done for the day.

Speaker 4 (22:00):

Unless unless I get a, an emergency email or text or different things. I do know that with my kids in school, I actually pick up my daughter who's in elementary school. And so every day Tim knows this, cause I gotta I gotta quit at four. I'm done because I gotta go pick up my daughter at four. And I usually do not come back into work after that unless there's, you know, I have a project or something that is due the next day that I haven't finished. But that's a, that's a thing with, with the kids being out of school, that's gone. And I have noticed, I have noticed actually in the past, you know, two days, it's only been two days. Uh, I've been going till five 30, six o'clock and I'm going, Oh, I gotta stop. I mean, this is just, cause you get caught up, as you said, you get an efficiency mode, you're going, you're writing, you're doing whatever it is and you just forget about the time.

Speaker 2 (22:50):

There's two things that I do, Liz. Uh, the, the first thing that I do is that when I'm, when I'm done with the work day, whatever time that is, I intentionally shut down my computer and close it, close the laptop, and I shut it off so that it, it takes more work, you know, there's some friction then to get back into work. And then the second thing I've been doing, and uh, you know, we've talked to a lot of people about whether or not, uh, we've asked this question in the speed round of would you rather give up your S your mobile phone or your laptop for a year? And the vast majority of people are willing to come

back and say, I'd rather give up my mobile phone because I can live with a laptop, but I can't emit or I, I can't imagine living without a laptop. And so I've been just in the last six months or so when I'm done with work, I take my phone and I put it on my nightstand where I'll get it the next morning. And so I'm, I'm just divorced from the mobile phone the evening.

Speaker 4 ([23:46](#)):

And it's not, that stuff isn't happening. It certainly could be, but, um, but it's just at a much lower volume to my eye. I think that shows that we're interviewing a lot of older people as opposed to the younger generation. Well, we've seen this. I remember, I remember this with, with people you know, who are in their twenties have told us the same thing.

Speaker 3 ([24:09](#)):

Yeah. I cannot, I cannot type on a mobile, like somehow my, I just need the big screen and I need the freedom. So I think, yeah, I think when it comes to work, I would pick, I want my lab.

Speaker 4 ([24:21](#)):

Yeah. Uh, so I think one of the things, um, that this is, and I don't know if this is a question is, is more of a statement, um, is the idea that this crisis has really identified a number of factors that go into our work, uh, into our life actually, that we've taken for granted for, for a long time. Mostly as it is, it relates to emotional and social connection. I think that we have not taken the importance of how, or we've not realized how important that social connection is to our emotional wellbeing. Uh, and you know, I've done a lot of work with, with motivation and one of the models that we talk about from motivation is this four drive model, uh, developed by Lawrence and, and Maria. It's Nitten Noria he's the, the guy at, at Harvard. Uh, God is crazy already. Um, but one of the things that they talk about is there's a drive to acquire and achieve as the first one, but the second one is this bond and belong this, this, this bond and belonged drive.

Speaker 4 ([25:27](#)):

And I know when I've talked with leaders and organizations before, you know, that's the one that they kind of, that's the team, the, the, you know, feeling good, kind of fun thing and bonding and yeah, that's not really hard. And you know, it just happens, right? And I think what maybe and, and, and what I'm hopeful for is that leaders start to realize that, that the bond and the long drive that we have, the social need for connection is one that we, we can't just dismiss out of hand and you know, we should probably pay more attention to it when, when work comes back into, into, into wellbeing. So I don't think there's a question there. I don't know if you, if you agree, you don't agree?

Speaker 3 ([26:09](#)):

Yeah, I mean I, I, we talk about belonging in the book. Um, and that sense of feeling part of a community, someone cares about you personally. Even if you make a mistake, it's okay, you're still on the team. Um, and a lot of, usually people in finance departments will push back. Uh, when I bring this up and say like, okay, great, but who cares? You know, like it's, it doesn't seem like a necessity. How does it impact the bottom line? And they actually at LinkedIn, the C H arrow who's now left, but she was there formerly Pat waters. She did a one year, she inserted four statements about belonging into the annual employee engagement survey and he didn't ask anyone and then they had everyone at LinkedIn take the survey and then when her data team ran the analysis, they found that the two statements that

were most predictive of whether or not someone was going to stay or leave within the next six months were how most strongly they agreed with someone at work cares about me personally.

Speaker 3 ([27:07](#)):

And if I make a mistake I still feel safe. And so belonging, you know, definitely shows up in like creativity, product productivity, um, but it really shows up in retention. And so I think that's one of the concerns with remote work too, is that if people feel less belonging, they also, if someone else offers them more money, it's just like, great, I'm going to switch over there because there's, there's not that glue keeping them stuck to the organism that stuck. But keeping them like wanting to stay at that organization as much as there used to be.

Speaker 2 ([27:37](#)):

I love ending on that. I just didn't want to say a word because that was just such a terrific, terrific way to end. Liz. It is always a pleasure to speak with you and it's, it's really great to catch up with you today under these even regrettable circumstances. But thanks so much for joining us on behavioral groups today.

Speaker 3 ([27:55](#)):

Yeah, thanks for reaching out and for pulling all this together. Um, I think it's a good time and people are looking for help and just hearing stories.

Speaker 2 ([28:09](#)):

Welcome to the special edition of the grooming session where Tim and I groove on some of the ideas and concepts that were inspired by our conversation with Liz. So, Tim, what are some of the key things that you are taking away from this conversation? Well, let's start with the bump ins, the informal bump ins, right? That happen at work that don't happen at home. So that brings about a need for us to be more intentional in the way we communicate. Uh, I just really love this idea of thinking about the number of times when I was in the office that I would walk into a meeting and see somebody that I haven't seen in a couple days and said, Oh, you know, now that I'm seeing you, I'm thinking, I know it's so thank you so much for doing that work. And I really appreciate it. And having that little bit of praise or recognition or just an exchange, Hey, how you doing? As we're walking into a meeting, those things aren't happening today unless we take them with a high degree of intentionality. And, and Liz made that really clear.

Speaker 5 ([29:03](#)):

And I think what was really apparent for me is the fact that when we had those bump ins in the office, in our worklife before we didn't understand the power that they brought, that the idea of just having those conversations as you're walking down the hallway, going to that meeting for 20 seconds, the impact that that has on our social wellbeing, on the performance that we have, because you might gain some additional information that you didn't know. And just the idea of feeling appreciated to her point of saying, you know, we realized that we do a lot of appreciation and recognition in those informal moments that we don't do now on email. So it's one of those elements from my perspective that you don't know what you have until it's gone and now that it's gone, I think people, I hope people will be much more reflective and appreciative of those moments.

Speaker 5 ([30:07](#)):

So I think that's a big, big piece. You and I have talked about work as a community a lot over the years and how important the community of work is. And one of the threads that binds the community of work together is are our personal lives by actually being vulnerable to each other, introducing what's going on in our lives, having the, Oh man, you know, I'm really, really struggling with what to do with my aging parents. Kind of a, a thing with, with our coworkers and when we're working from home and it's just, you know, keep the head down and get the work done and write the damn emails. They weren't going to miss out on that unless, unless we're intentional about it. I loved when Liz talked about, you know, I just go into efficiency mode. That was it. Yes it was. I get that because I do that because I have office from home for a lot.

Speaker 5 ([31:00](#)):

I would, I've talked to people about this because I go, I don't know if I could go back into an office environment and work because I work in these bursts that are just really efficient that I go for a couple of hours and get a lot done and if I had interruptions and bump ins in between there, I don't know if I could work it that well, but it also lends itself into an isolation that really on healthy and I need to be more aware of it and Liz brought up a wonderful set of just different tricks and habits and nudges that you can use in order to get yourself out of that. The idea of, wow, if I realized I've been sitting here for three hours, I better just get up and move. Yeah, probably even before three hours. Right. We should be doing this every 90 minutes, every maybe 60 minutes, every 40 minutes.

Speaker 5 ([31:54](#)):

I don't know. But whatever that is, we don't, if we get stuck in efficiency mode, it's just going to have a longterm negative impact. It's going to lead to burnout is going to be unhealthy for us. Uh, it's going to lead to a whole bunch of different things. So the idea of being purposeful, of having those reach out to people, uh, to connect socially and emotionally, but also to take time and get out of the efficiency mode, take a little break, take a little relief, make sure you're doing that to keep yourself well. Yeah. What else struck you, Kurt? What, uh, what was a high point for you in our conversation with Liz? Well, actually, you and I were talking about this, is that this overarching idea of bringing more of yourself into this work, being vulnerable to a certain degree. And we don't often do that.

Speaker 5 ([32:48](#)):

I mean, it happens again, I think in some more of those bumpin type moments. But the idea of being purposeful about bringing yourself into these conversations into this new world that we're going to have to live through for a little while, hopefully just a little while. Uh, and, and bringing that out, I thought that was a really key, yeah. This, uh, this emotionality, this what, what did she talk about? A proofread with an emotional lens, right. You know, so like, allow yourself to think about the emotionality of what you're communicating. Not, and I don't think she meant it in terms of like being really high spirited and angry or, you know, are super direct, but more about, uh, on the softer side, what, how are we feeling about this? What, what are the things that we're feeling as we're, as we're communicating these messages and bring a little bit more of that, or at least take part of your, your email and say, here's how I'm feeling about this and let's try to give some context.

Speaker 5 ([33:52](#)):

Because when it's only the written word, we're lacking. So, so much of what about, how about the full communication? Bring, bring a humanity perspective into this, to that degree, right, right, right. Emails and it's bullet points and it's get this done and it is really, if you just read those emails, you're going,

you're a robot. I don't, you know, that's a kind of a thing that way. Sometimes I feel like I'm a robot. I feel like I'm just like in robot mode sometimes. Robot, Tim, I think we all do, right? We, because that's how we have been taught. That's how emails are written. They're not written from an emotional perspective. They are typically work. Emails are not written from an emotional perspective. They're written from a performance and efficiency perspective and we've, you know, the work that I do with the lantern group and we talk, we, we work with people on their emails and oftentimes what we're doing is saying cut down on the jargon, cut down on, you know, having way too much information included in there and different things.

Speaker 5 ([35:01](#)):

We haven't actually thought about the emotional side of things, which is actually something I think we've missed. And so it's something I'm going to be bringing back out of this even back in normal times because I think that's an aspect of work in that communication mode that is lacking and we can do a much better job about that. I also think in these crazy times and the work environment of working from home and, and physical separation that we have, we have to be thinking about some of that emotional proofreading of, of other things as well of the phone conversations that we have of the zoom chats that we have, the webinars or whatever else it would be in particularly because we're also in this time of fear and uncertainty. And I think we get value and we get a comfort from people being emotionally open and honest with ours, with ourselves and with others. And I think that can be helpful. I think that, uh, to a degree we need to have that. It's, it's something that is going to be, uh, in the longterm benefit of everybody.

Speaker 2 ([36:19](#)):

Yeah. My wife had her one-on-one, a weekly one-on-one with her boss this morning and she commented to me that they started with a little bit of social chatter, which Liz brought up, right start your start your online meetings with a little bit of catching up. And it led to what my wife believed was a much more intimate exchange about the challenges that her boss was having with her aging parents. And that she didn't think would've happened if they were in the office. It was actually more in depth and they took a little more time to unfold it. Uh, and she was aware of it and, and actually made a note of it to me and I thought, well that's, that's a good sign that it kind of happens organically if we let it,

Speaker 5 ([37:02](#)):

if we let it and, and if we're maybe even thinking about it, right. And doing these things with an intentionality that we didn't do before because we, again, we didn't know what we were missing before because we had these bump ins and other emotional conversations that we had. So now because we're realizing where we don't get those baby, it is more important. And so let's be more intentional about it. I'm really interested in seeing how this plays out. You know, at some point this crisis is going to end at some time in the future. Hopefully sooner as opposed to later we'll get back into a more regular routine. A more regular way of operating. Yeah. Hope. So. What are the norms that are going to stick with us? And we tried to talk about this a little bit, but I think it's going to be really interesting to just see, you know, two years from now, five years from now, what are those habits that we have? What are the norms that we have from a work environment, uh, that are continuing, that have, that were started during this time that had a stickiness to them that they were able to be maintained. Um, I'll be fascinated to, to just kind of watch and to look and to observe.

Speaker 2 ([38:20](#)):

Right? It's possible. It's even likely to imagine that there will be changes and it's possible to imagine that some things like a little bit more vulnerability, a little bit more authenticity in the way we could be carried over. But you're right, it time will tell who, who knows what

Speaker 5 (38:40):

will actually happen. I would be hopeful for that. I don't necessarily think it's likely. Yeah, you don't sound optimistic actually. Well I don't. I, I think because we're in a time of crisis that is unique. It's, it's unfamiliar. We're, we're fearful, we're scared. We're have all this uncertainty that there's an emotional component that just goes with that I think.

Speaker 2 (39:06):

And then like, like once it's over, the, there won't be any more emotion. Like it'll just drain out of us,

Speaker 5 (39:11):

I don't think, well, no, it's not that emotion will drain out of us. We're all emotional creatures all the time. We talk about that all the damn time. Right. But the striking laser light focus that comes with something like this, that understanding that people are going through these things and that they have these issues with their aging parents, particularly given all of the concern that we would have over, they may be getting coronavirus and, and the impact that that might have. I think the idea of having distance and the need, realizing the need that we have for this, this interpersonal connection, I think when it gets back to normal, that goes away. And so then you don't have that light shining down on it that we don't have that IM that vividness of what is required. And so I think then you go back into almost standard operating mode where you know it's about the performance and yes you have the normal bumpin so you don't need to be intentional about it because it just happens naturally and you know, you don't want to be too emotional at work and too vulnerable because somebody might take advantage of that.

Speaker 5 (40:28):

I don't know. I hope I keep my fingers crossed, cross my toes, grab a four leaf Clover. I do what you know. All of those different things. Again, uh, to, to Annie Duke, I would say that's a 20 to 30% probability that it's going to happen.

Speaker 2 (40:46):

I'm going to yes. And that with AB it's not binary, but maybe there are some aspects of, of emotionality and vulnerability that creep in at low levels. Maybe not at high levels, maybe they don't dominate, but maybe they continue to stay in our corporate lives in lesser to a lesser degree that it is now. Uh, but so going from 100% now to maybe 20% of the future.

Speaker 5 (41:16):

Well, we'll see. And again, I don't think it's 100% now. I, I, I don't think that, but I do think that you bring up a really good point because I think there could be individuals and individual organizations out there that take this to heart, right? Is it going to be a vast sweep of every organization in particular, large multinational, fortune 500 companies? Probably not in smaller companies where you, you see the impact that this has, uh, because you have five, 10, 50 people working there and you have a leader that recognizes this and is leading that charge maybe. And, and that would be a good thing.

Speaker 2 (42:00):

And we will likely see some companies come out of this exploiting the idea that, Oh my gosh, I can get all my employees to work from home, I can save on office space and uh, we'll, we'll reduce costs and do all that. And we'll also see the other end of the spectrum. Like, we need more togetherness. We need to have more gathering spaces in our company and let's bring people back in. So maybe it's maybe work from home becomes a less important factor to some organizations.

Speaker 5 ([42:27](#)):

Well, and it might be a mix of those models understanding, Hey, there's some really great things about working from home and eight, it's a lot easier than we thought right there. We have the technology, we can do it. And you get any efficiency mode in that, that moment and you, you can get a lot done. But we also realize that we need that personal connection. And so it may be a mixed model, uh, which could work out I think would be, again, it could be cost savings for the organization. They maybe you have desk sharing and various different pieces. So yeah, the schedules and you have overlap of when people are in and there's lots of different things. And for me think from an organizational perspective that could happen from this. So with that

Speaker 2 ([43:10](#)):

it's going to be interesting, right? That was my first thing is going to be interesting to see what sticks, what doesn't, how, how our work life is changed. Uh, when this is all over.

Speaker 6 ([43:24](#)):

[inaudible]

Speaker 2 ([43:24](#)):

thank you for listening to the special episode of Behavioral Grooves. We hope that you found it interesting and insightful. If you liked it, please let others know. We think that the topic is important and maybe we can help in educating people about how behavioral science can help us all out in this current craziness that we are going through. Also please let us know if you have any thoughts or ideas that would be helpful or that we could share. You can reach us through the connect tab on the behavioral group's website@wwwdotbehavioralgrooves.com or through Twitter. I am @THoulihan and Kurt is @WhatMotivates. We really do love hearing from you and this topic is one that spurs lots of emotions and thought. As part of our mission, we want to expand and inform the community of people who think about positively applying behavioral science to life. One way that happens is through leaving reviews. If you think this podcast is beneficial and should grow, we would really appreciate to leave a review on Apple podcasts or whichever podcast server you use. It only takes a few minutes and goes a long way to boost us in the algorithms that are used to search results.

Speaker 5 ([44:32](#)):

Also, please check out the show notes. We are linking to a number of resources, articles, podcasts, newsletters that we've vetted to bring good facts and ideas around Covid-19 and the coronavirus, its impact and ways that we can help slow down the spread. There is a lot of information that's being pushed out to everyone each day and we are weeding through it to find good stuff so that you don't have to. We truly appreciate you listening. Now go out and wash your hands

Speaker 1 ([45:14](#)):

[inaudible].