00:00
Speaker 1
Foreign so 75% of us think we listen pretty well, but only 12.1% of us think that everyone else listens well. So just imagine that in our school communities what if and I think this surveys it resonates with our lived truth so I think we can trust it. What if 75% of ruckus makers believe they were pretty good listeners, but only 12.1% of their students believed they were good listeners? If only 12.1% of their faculty and staff believed that they were good listeners. If only 12.1% of families, parents, caregivers believed they were good listeners. If only 12.1% of their fellow division leaders and principal leaders across their districts believed they were good listeners, that is the listening lie and it's at the heart of my work is helping turn up the volume so people can understand.

01:04
Speaker 1
Wow, I thought I was a pretty good listener, but the reality is that I am not.

01:12
Speaker 2
You know how we're always talking about how to do school different? Well Orchard has brought something to the table that does exactly that. For the first time, there's an actual score for career readiness for your students. ORCHARD scores every student on how ready they are for life after graduation and hands you a number you can take to your board. Learn more at BetterLeaders Orchard Careers that's BetterLeaders Orchard Careers. Looking to create the kind of campus experience students never forget, ODP Business Solutions transforms ordinary spaces into extraordinary learning environments. Visit ODPbusiness.com education and let's do school different. That's ODP business.com education. If you could differentiate instruction in 20 minutes or less, would you do it for all your students? Well you can with IXL. Over 1 million teachers use IXL because it empowers them to use effective data informed instruction.

02:25
Speaker 2
And you can get started today@ixl.com leaders. That's ixl.com leaders. You didn't take the principal's chair for the budget meetings and the paperwork. You took it to change kids lives. Kids First Education helps you get that back with coaching and with support that's built specifically for school leaders. This episode is brought to you by Kids First Education. Learn more at KidsFirst LLC leaders. That's KidsFirst LLC leaders. Corey talked to Digital Danny 910 times in just five months and when I asked him about why he hired Digital Danny he

said well, the first job was to communicate things. Those high stake messages I needed to share a non renewal of a teacher, a difficult parent situation and I needed those message to land.

03:30
Speaker 2
And Digital Danny helped I had an idea of what I wanted to share, but digital Danny gave me other ways of thinking about how to communicate based on the stakeholder. So if you have high stakes messages that you need to land as well, maybe you should hire digital Danny for that job as well. Get started and try for yourself at myprincipalcoach.com Ruckus that's my principalcoach.com Ruckus.

04:01
Speaker 3
My name is Dan Watt. I'm a school leader in British Columbia, Canada and co host of the better Leaders, Better schools Ruckus cast. Today I'm excited to welcome Bradley James Davies, a bestselling author, keynote speaker and an ICF certified coach. Bradley's work takes listening to the next level, but it's my goal today to get you talking. Bradley, welcome to the show.

04:27
Speaker 1
Awesome, Dan, Thanks. Thanks for having me. And greetings to all the Ruckus makers out there.

04:32
Speaker 3
Right on. When we last spoke, you mentioned an experience you had previous in your career where the pain of not listening, well, kind of took hold for you. And that was when you were driving the Oscar Mayer Wienermobile. I've been dying to ask you what that's about. Could you tell us about that?

04:52
Speaker 1
Well, so just real quick context for the Ruckus makers. You know, my first job out of college was driving the Oscar Mayer wienermobile around the United States for a year. And much to the chagrin of my parents who had a different vision for my professional life. But the story about listening was in Boston. And this is going back a million years ago when dinosaurs were roaming the planet. And also that the Boston city was undergoing what they called the big dig. And the Big dig, Dan, was this huge infrastructure project of aspiring to put a big percentage of their highway system underground. Super, super ambitious and

also a gigantic headache for Bostonians in terms of traffic. Well, my partner and I, Kimberly Ketchup, I was Bradley Baloney. Kimberly Ketchup and I were at an event at a children's hospital in the south of Boston.

05:53
Speaker 1
And it was fun driving the wienermobile because we got to do a lot of interesting events. And this one was particularly special, bringing some joy to, to kids who are struggling with their health. So that night I had a flight booked to fly from Boston to Dallas to go see my little brother play football. And it was super important to me to get there. Well, the event ended at 5, and I don't recall exactly, but the flight took off at like seven. So it was really tight in terms of timing. So we hop in the Wienermobile. I'm Driving, Kimberly is riding. Wait for it, please. Shot Bun. And helping me navigate our way from South Boston to the airport. Remember, this is back in the day before phones and Google Maps.

06:40
Speaker 1
So, you know, there's Kimberly Ketchup with, like, the Rand McNally map, you know, and, like, handwritten directions of how to get to the airport. Well, the directions take us on this. This road called Storo Drive in Boston. And for folks not familiar with Boston, Stro Drive is kind of like a two or three lane highway. But it goes right through the heart of Boston. And as we're driving and I'm pushing the speed limit just a little bit, There's a sign spanning the entire highway. And it says, low clearance ahead 10ft. Well, the back of the Wienermobile is 10ft, 10 inches tall. And it said, low clearance ahead. And it's amazing, Dan. And maybe I think ruckus makers were so optimistic they can resonate with this. I was like, it'll work out.

07:28
Speaker 1
I mean, I was so focused on getting to see my little brother that I was like, oh, there's no way. Come on, 10ft. No way. So we keep driving. And then there's another sign. But this sign only spanned two of the three lanes. And the sign said, Low clearance ahead 10ft. But it was in the right lane and the middle lane. So I moved over to the left lane, thinking I was safe. It's at that moment that Kimberly Ketchup said, hey, it says low clearance ahead. I just kind of kept driving. I may have even pushed down on the accelerator a little bit more. Well, another sign comes, low clearance ahead. This phone with flashing yellow lights. And Kimberly Ketchup says, again, hey, there's low clearance ahead. We need to get off.

08:17

Speaker 1
No surprise that Oscar Meyer really didn't want us to take off the top of the Wienermobile. And it, you know, wasn't an unreasonable threat. So Kimberly Ketchup told me a second time. And then we crest this hill, Dan, and we see this underpass of gigantic bright yellow sign, flashing yellow lights. Low clearance, 10ft. And there was no way for us to get off. There was no way. And in that moment, I must confess, I hit the accelerator just for a second, thinking, you know, if you kind of accelerate, maybe you kind of lower it. You can kind of get through. I mean, I was so blinded by my desire to get to see my little brother. Well, there's no getting off. And there's this, you know, concrete arch. Low clearance 10ft. So we slam on the brakes and the nose of the.

09:03
Speaker 1
The front of The Wiener Mobile is just shy of this underpass. And then we have another problem that we're in the far left lane. Because remember, I moved over two lanes to evade the first or second side. Well, the. The Wiener Mobile opens on the side out like a. Wait for it. Lamborghini. So there we are in the left lane and we can't open the door. And, you know, we're both freaking out and we can't get out. This is again during the big Dig. It's rush hour traffic. Cars are flying by. So we knew that we can. We can pop out for safety reasons. We can pop out the windows. The Wienermobile. So I pop out the window on the driver's side. And I climb out to see if there's any way, for the love of all that is good and holy.

09:48
Speaker 1
That perhaps the Wienermobile gods would let us sneak underneath this underpass. And as I'm climbing out, I look back and there's just a traffic jam going on for all of eternity. And people are driving by in a typical Bostonian fashion. Are using expletives and F bomb as an adverb. And now, and you know, a pronoun, you name it in ways like I'd never heard before. They were not happy to see that we don't feel. And so there we are stuck on storrow drive. And of course, a cop comes up in little friendly public service announcement. When they say 10ft, they actually lie to you. But they bake in stupidity into their signage around the United States. Very wise. Turns out it was really low clearance. 11Ft. It was an arch. So there was just 11ft at the top.

10:37
Speaker 1
So this, the police officer stopped all traffic. And were able to sneak through with. With 2 inches of clearance through. Through this underpass. The next morning, I kid you not, on the front page of the Boston Globe was me climbing

out of the Wiener Mobile. That's just this picture of just traffic going again off into eternity. So ruckus makers might be asking, hey, Bradley, what the heck does this have to do with listening? It actually has to do with the fact that listening. There's a silent tax of not listening. Well, we don't know what we're missing when we don't listen. Well, we feel the pain when we say something we regret right away. We feel the pain when we don't say something down the road. But in this instance with the Windmobile and Boston.

11:29
Speaker 1
And innumerable instances across our day, we actually don't know what we're missing. We don't know the pain of not listening. Well, and in that moment in Boston with the wiener mobile was a very rare moment that I got to feel specifically the consequence for not listening. Well, if for whatever reason, I did not listen to Kimberly Ketchup to at least three times where she said, low clearance, we need to get off. There are a million reasons why we don't listen well, but I like to share that story. One, because it's just one of my favorite stories to share, and two, it demonstrates so well how rare it is where we feel the pain. That silent tax for Navis Nimble.

12:09
Speaker 3
Well, I feel your pain.

12:11
Speaker 1
Oh, there's quite a day at the office, let me tell you.

12:14
Speaker 3
It's so funny. We often share about how it was great to grow up before the Internet or before cell phones, yet somehow that found its way onto the front page of the paper.

12:25
Speaker 1
Well, the Rand McNally piece. Remember the big old maps we opened up? I mean, I don't know how we pulled off anything, to be honest.

12:32
Speaker 3
They never folded back up the same way.

12:34
Speaker 1
No, no.

12:35
Speaker 3
It's funny. You shared. I can't remember at what point. This Fortune 500 stat that 75% of people rate themselves as above average listeners, yet only 12% rate their colleagues that way. Can you tell us a little bit about what that gap means and maybe what the takeaway is for school leaders?

12:55
Speaker 1
So this is what I call the listening lie. And a fellow named Oscar Tromboli wrote a really helpful book on listening called how to Listen, and he cites this study of Fortune 500 companies or this survey. So 75% of us think we listen pretty well, but only 12.1% of us think that everyone else listens well. So just imagine that in our school communities, what if. And I think this surveys, it resonates with our lived truth, so I think we can trust it. What if 75% of ruckus makers believe they're pretty good listeners, but only 12.1% of their students believed they were good listeners? If only 12.1% of their faculty and staff believed that they were good listeners. If only 12.1% of families, parents, caregivers, believed they were good listeners.

13:52
Speaker 1
If only 12.1% of their fellow division leaders and principal leaders across their districts believed they were good listeners. That is the listening lie. And it's at the heart of my work is helping turn up the volume so people can understand. Wow. I thought I was a pretty good listener, but the reality is that I am not.

14:13
Speaker 3
It's interesting because where my brain is going is Back to the Oscar Mayer wiener mobile. And.

14:19
Speaker 1
As one does,.

14:22
Speaker 3

As I was listening to you, I felt I was finding the angles. Like I was such a relief when you shared that. Oh, there's actually a buffer built in for. I can't.

14:30
Speaker 1
Remember how.

14:31
Speaker 3
You said it, but like folks that don't listen or folks that don't follow your stupidity. Right, thank you. So that seems relevant to me. Right. Like I'm listening for myself in a self centered way to find the workaround, to find the angle and not really listening to understand. And I forget how you said it before, but like seeking to understand rather than be understood. How's that manifest?

14:59
Speaker 1
Well, and that I've taken from the famous St. Francis Serenity Prayer, you know, help me seek first to love rather than be loved. And he goes through a really great list and one of them ultimately is help me to seek to understand first rather than be understood. It's kind of at the heart of the best way to be interesting is to be interested. And I do believe at the heart of there's a number of pieces that impede our ability to listen well. And we can get to a handful of them. But one of them is a deep need as humans to be known and to be understood. And I think when it, when we bring it to a ruckus makers, we're so passionate about what we do. We have all these ideas about what's best for kids in our schools.

15:48
Speaker 1
We so desperately want to give them voice and see them come to life. That's not a listening disposition. The listening disposition is okay, there's a humility of I have a million ideas for schools. Pause, breathe. As do your teachers, as do your families, your fellow leaders. So can we flip from a I want to be interesting paradigm from a I want to be understood paradigm to a listening.

16:19
Speaker 3
Disposition of I am not the font of good ideas, nor is anyone asking me to be at my schools, but rather my role is to cultivate a context, a community, a culture where all other great ideas might be brought forth. And then the good news for ruckus makers, with that listening disposition, what you're going to find is, let's say you've got 10 great ideas. Well, at least seven of them are going to be given voice to back to you before you've even named them yourself. So of those

seven, and we don't have time for all 10. I know we ruckus makers want to do all 10 in one school year. We don't have time for all 10 dot so all of A sudden, because you've embraced the leadership listening disposition of a listener.

17:03
Speaker 3
Now your team has given you seven of the ideas you already had, maybe a handful that you didn't have. And of those seven, now you already have momentum coming from your team rather than by fiat leading.

17:13
Speaker 1
From the top.

17:14
Speaker 3
Can you tell me a little bit more about that listening disposition? You say that there's 10. Can you give me your top three?

17:20
Speaker 1
Oh, I was saying in. Sorry. In terms of a listening disposition, I was saying that perhaps Your team has 10 great ideas for your school. You know, and seven of them overlap in terms of ideation and generating ideas for what's good for kids.

17:33
Speaker 3
How's that work? Like, what's that look like for you in your coaching practice?

17:37
Speaker 1
What does what look like?

17:38
Speaker 3
Your listening disposition.

17:40
Speaker 1
As a coach.

17:41

Speaker 3
Yeah,.

17:41
Speaker 1
Well, I'll tell you that, you know, there's something. I think you've probably heard this as well. There's a leadership concept called the coach approach. And ultimately, you and I as coaches were ultimately just great listeners. And, you know, ultimately, that's my work, is hoping to catalyze leaders embracing their journey as good leaders. So, you know, it speaks to. To be a good coach is to be a good leader. And I can get into lots of details, but for leaders specifically, what I like to emphasize is speak less, speak last, ask better questions. So from a coaching standpoint, when I'm a coach, my value is asking better questions. You know, it's ironic that my mission is to speak up for listening, because here I am speaking a lot. By.

18:26
Speaker 1
By contrast, when I'm in sessions with clients, it sounds very different because, of course, it's them talking. So one that comes up in particular in terms of leadership, speak less, speak last, ask better questions is just speak less. In a coaching session, we would measure our success if the client speaks 80% or more of the time, and we speak 20% or less of the time. Most people have heard of the adage, you have two ears and one mouth, so listen twice as much as you speak. And in my book, I like to challenge folks to actually embrace that 80, 20 rule so you'll know you're having a successful conversation with our clients.

19:04
Speaker 1
Ruckus makers will know they're having a successful conversation with families, coworkers, et cetera, when the other person is speaking 80% or more of the time, and they're speaking 20% or less of the time. And now with that 20%, ideally as a coach and ideally as a listening leader, a big chunk of that 20% is actually asking questions rather than making statements. And you know, if intriguing to you, my real quick backup napkin. Anatomy of a high quality question for your ruckus makers to embrace right now is short as possible preamble, open ended, one question at a time. The opposite of that is question kryptonite. Super long preamble. And we meander in the long preamble land with the best of intentions. Close ended. And then question stacking. We often, instead of asking one question, was stack six or seven on top of each other.

20:00
Speaker 1

Parents are notorious for that. Like when they pick up their kids, damn. Kid pops in the car, kids get just gets off the bus. And there the family is saying, hey, Dan, how was your day? How'd the math test go? What did Mr. Smith say? Did Billy sit with you at lunch? You know, we just question stack. So that's another example of questioning kryptonite.

20:17
Speaker 3
Mm. Can you tell me a little bit about the importance of word choice when it comes to asking questions?

20:24
Speaker 1
So in spirit of word choice, it's critical. And there's a super simple to name, not always easy to do, but simple to name. Best practice called mirroring. And mirroring is using the speaker's language, their specific language, as the building blocks of the next question you offer them. So an example, Dan, your partner is angry at you, frustrated at you, has negative feelings towards you, and has started to share what is frustrating about you to them. And they say, I'm so frustrated with you. And you respond and say, why are you so angry? Oh boy. You just deviated from frustrating or frustrated to angry. And we know that doesn't help a conversation at all. Mirroring the example here is there's your partner saying, hey, I'm really frustrated.

21:20
Speaker 1
And what you can do then is just say back to them, what's so frustrating about what I'm doing? A great school example is this. And mirroring is absolute magic. A great school example is a fourth grade teacher comes to the principal's office and says, I am really angry about Billy. Now Billy has had quite a track record at the school. Billy came to the school in first grade and Billy was one of those kids that's super easy to love and super hard to like. Billy required a lot. And that first grade team, they pulled their hair out. They did all they could to care for Billy. And then he went on to second grade and in those pass off meetings for the first grade team, met with the second grade team. Boy, oh boy, they warned that second grade team, hey, beware of Billy.

22:13
Speaker 1
Good kid. But oh, My gosh, he requires so much. The second grade was even tougher. Started to have some discipline issues. And then that second grade team did all they could. They did their best. Then they passed Billy onto the third grade and they had those pass off meetings. And Billy just got painted as

quite a bad kid. Now fast forward. Billy's gone to the first grade, the second grade, the third grade, and this new fourth grade teacher comes to the principal's office and says, Mr. Watt, I am so angry about Billy. Now, with mirroring as your guide, being a listening leader, you would mirror. It would not be crazy for you to respond to that fourth grade teacher with something like, oh, I know Billy's a handful. We're doing all we can. Thank you so much for all you're doing.

23:07
Speaker 1
Boy, oh boy, Billy, because you've heard the stories for years. First grade teacher team, second grade teacher team, and the third grade teacher team. So instead you mirror and you say to the fourth grade teacher, and she's new to the school, what's making you angry about Billy? Note there that I mirrored using the specific language the teacher used right back to her. What's making you angry about Billy? And this is what the teacher shares. I was just at lunch and I could not believe what I heard. I can't believe that I heard adults speaking so disparagingly about a child. I adore Billy. Billy's having a great year with me, and I am just beside myself that my colleagues would speak about a child that way. Wow, just like that.

23:56
Speaker 1
With this simple practice of mirroring to your point, being very careful about words, you've received a lot more information about Billy, his journey, and your team.

24:07
Speaker 3
I noticed too. I like how you use the word what instead of.

24:11
Speaker 1
Why. Absolutely. Yeah. The a bonus point if the anatomy of a high quality question is shortest possible preamble, open ended, one question at a time. Bonus points go to start your questions with what.

24:24
Speaker 3
Canon takes a moral judgment out of it. Hey,.

24:27
Speaker 1

Why? Why is like you're on the witness stand. Why did you do that, Dan? And and we can relate to our kids, right? The kid spills his drink in the lunchroom and our initial response is, why do you do that? In our best moments, we're like, hey, buddy, what happened? Oh, I didn't put my drink in the no spill zone. Well, what should we do next? Clean it up. What do you. Those what? Questions are expansive and you're 1 million percent right, Daniel. Why? Questions have this just hint of being judgmental and requiring a defensive posture and explanation.

25:10
Speaker 2
For years Career readiness meant counting things, counting CTE signups, work based learning hours. Numbers that prove kids showed up, but not that they're ready. Orchard built the first real career readiness.

25:27
Speaker 3
Score.

25:28
Speaker 2
Think of it like a credit score. Every student gets a number across eight dimensions of readiness. It updates as they grow, as they evolve. And it's something you can take to your school board and stand behind. And it works with the systems you already use. See it@betterleaders.com Orchard Careers that's BetterLeaders Orchard Careers ODP Business Solutions, formerly Office Depot Business Solutions Division, has been a trusted partner for schools for 30 years. At ODP Business Solutions, we're by your side to meet your evolving education needs. Now picture this. A learning environment so engaging students forget to check their phones. Sounds impossible. That's exactly what we helped Belago Academy create. Their secret Working with ODP Business Solutions to build collaborative spaces that actually work. We didn't just deliver furniture. We delivered a completely new way of learning.

26:35
Speaker 2
From tech integration that makes lessons come alive, to flexible spaces that adapt to any teaching style, to sustainable solutions that reduce your carbon footprint. We're here to help you do school different. And the best part? You get it all from a single supplier. All to help you simplify ordering and streamline budgeting while staying compliant with easy access to cooperative contracts. However you want to advance. ODP Business Solutions has 30 years of experience helping districts like yours get ahead. Visit ODPbusiness.comeducation to learn more. That's ODPbusiness.com education

as a school leader, time is your greatest resource and there is a real sense of urgency when it comes to getting students what they need right now. That's why I love IXL's universal screener. In 20 minutes or less, you can identify students in need of intervention. And IXL's Learning Adaptive Platform makes differentiating instruction easy.

27:45
Speaker 2
As students learn, IXL adjusts to the right level of difficulty for each individual student. Get started today@ixl.com leaders. That's ixl.com leaders. Somewhere under the emails, the compliance and the crises, there's a reason you got an education. It was for the students. The kids. Kids first education exists to help school and district leaders put that reason back at center. It's led by educators who've done the work that have partnered with teams across the nation on coaching, leadership development and professional learning. And it's all built around what's best for your students. It's practical, it's personal, and it sticks. 98% Of educators that Kids first works with says they left ready to use what they learned that week. Principals, admin, district leaders. Let's put Kids first together. You could partner with Kids first at KidsFirst LLC leaders. That's Kids First LLC leaders.

29:01
Speaker 2
Of all the principals who use Digital Dandy, the one who uses him the most lost a teacher in the first week of school. It was an abrupt resignation and students and staff thought about quitting or leaving the school. In response, this principal had to address his staff Monday morning. The wrong tone in any direction would have made the situation worse. Too soft and it sounds like nothing happened. Too hot, and it sounds like you're blaming the teacher who left. What he needed wasn't a rider. He needed someone who'd sat in that same exact seat for hundreds of reps to help him land the right move. Teaching as a calling connection over compliance and then crafting the right words. The principal followed up with a speech and a memo to the staff that week. And it worked.

30:08
Speaker 2
If you also have high stakes messages that you need to land Digital, Danny can help. He was built for this. And you can get started with him@my principalcoach.com ruckus. That's my principalcoach.com/ruckus.

30:29
Speaker 3

Can you tell us a little bit about the three E's of listening as you understand them? What's that look like in practice for a principal?

30:37
Speaker 1
The three E's of listening. They, they create quite the three legged stool of listening. So everyone feels as though we listen with our ears. The reality is we hear with our ears. So clearly. You know, ears are important as one of the E's of listening. We also listen with our eyes. You know, in North America, we are fixated on eye contact. Look them in their eyes. Now in our culture, in North American culture, that can be interpreted as respect. In other cultures, not so much. But with listening, it, if we just focus our eyes on the speaker's eyes, we're missing out on a multitude of information. You know, the muscles in the face and how they twinge, the slight lean back versus the pullback, the look away. You know, all these micro expressions in the face that convey so much meaning.

31:33
Speaker 1
Not to mention the body language, the shoulders forward, the shoulders back, et cetera. So we listen with our ears, we listen with our eyes as well. So I invite ruckus makers to let your eyes wander to their eyes, to their face, to their body and back again, take in all of those inputs that their face and body are giving you when they're communicating. And then last but not least is our Emotions, we listen with feeling, and we.

31:59
Speaker 3
Filter all of.

32:00
Speaker 1
This input we're receiving through our eyes.

32:02
Speaker 3
And.

32:02
Speaker 1
Our ears, through.

32:04

Speaker 3
Past experience, wisdom,.

32:06
Speaker 1
Et.

32:06
Speaker 3
Cetera, to then make meaning.

32:08
Speaker 1
Of.

32:08
Speaker 3
All these.

32:09
Speaker 1
Inputs. And brought together,.

32:11
Speaker 3
It creates a wonderful comprehensive input of what the person is trying to.

32:16
Speaker 1
Convey to us.

32:17
Speaker 3
That's fascinating. And it makes me think of in a sense too, building a relationship, maybe even with somebody that we don't have background and experience with. But when you told me about Bradley Baloney, right, that's now a touch point and a memory that will stick with me from this interaction. And, and so that was an emotion, right, that made me laugh on the inside and.

32:42
Speaker 1
Yeah, yeah,.

32:43
Speaker 3
It built a little bit of connection in the moment through that. Sharing.

32:47
Speaker 1
When emotions can be, are often very much a gift for our listening and we also need to be aware of their limitations. So when I sit down, a ruckus, meager sits down with an aggrieved parent. School leaders have sat down with a frustrated parent or two. And so you're going to listen with your ears, of course, you're going to listen with your eyes, taking all those inputs and now your emotions, you're receiving this parent who's in a desperate place. That can clearly be a real gift. A simple example is tears. So without the emotional filter, the lens through which to interpret these inputs, we would just see, oh, that looks like some kind of a saline solution coming out of the human's eye.

33:34
Speaker 1
It's a simple example, but a good one that, oh, emotions, my emotional history, my emotional ability gives me the opportunity to say, oh, this parent is sad. So that's when emotions can be a gift. However, our emotions sitting innumerable frustrated parent meetings, they can also work against us in terms of confirmation bias, et cetera. Oh, I've been with this kind of a parent before, or I know what they're thinking when in reality we know so little of their story. So if we can sit in curiosity longer what our emotions bring us initially, say thank you and pause. Just rent that. Rent what our emotions bring us for a moment and still seek through questions and curiosity to bring forth more of their story. Because, you know, family ABC isn't necessarily like just like family xyz, that we have to be patient.

34:32
Speaker 1
So emotions are critical for listening and also bring with them a bit of a risk as well.

34:38
Speaker 3
You remind me of a, a really important thought that occurred earlier when you talked about North American culture. I think even within North America we could say that culture is not monolithic in our Continent.

34:50

Speaker 1
Fair.

34:51
Speaker 3
And.

34:51
Speaker 1
I think Canadians would 100% want to convey that. Yes, but even Americans. Yeah,.

34:58
Speaker 3
Even within Canada. Right. Indigenous cultures in west coast, east coast and northern communities. And I think that from time to time, bias is involved or privileges involved. And stepping out of that or maybe holding that at bay. And you use the word curiosity. I think that's what we're getting at, is that will help me listen more effectively. If I'm able to listen longer and lean into that curiosity. Would you agree?

35:25
Speaker 1
One million percent, Dan? And this comes out particularly in our coaching. I wish I had embraced this when I was a school leader. So I just beg ruckus makers to embrace this. I came into conversations as a school leader presuming I knew a lot more than I did about the situation, particularly about the person and their story. And in our training as coaches, they hammer home that the initial concern is never the heart of the matter. What a person presents to you is a fraction. I'm talking a sliver of the reality of the situation. And oftentimes, when my training was at Georgetown University, they said, oftentimes, the heart of the matter rests at least seven high quality questions into the conversation.

36:14
Speaker 3
I like that.

36:15
Speaker 1
Too. Oh, I just love it as a discipline, even with, again, my clients. Because emotion and bias comes into my work as a client, particularly when I'm working with school leaders. I'm, oh, yeah, I've had that board meeting before. I need to pause right there, say, oh, no, no. This board meeting isn't like the board

meetings I've had. This is their board meeting. And I don't know who's all in the room. I don't know all that's going on in the school leader's mind. So to continue just to push pause on my conclusions as a coach and instead offer more questions for not only the speaker in terms of my client, but in terms of any situation a ruckus speaker finds themselves in. What more can I learn? There is more to be known.

36:57
Speaker 1
And that's a gigantic part of a listening disposition is that embracing a curiosity mindset and a curiosity approach, with the premise being that I'm a fool if I believe I have even 50% understanding of the situation. The reality is you do not.

37:13
Speaker 3
It reminds me of Michael Bungay Stanley's and what else questions.

37:18
Speaker 1
Yeah, totally.

37:19
Speaker 3
And what else? And what else?

37:21
Speaker 1
Yeah, he got credit for what is pretty much. I'm not sure what your coaching training was like, but I remember being at Georgetown and they talked about, I call it the king of all questions, just this two words, what else? You know, I like how Michael did the acronym there and it sells well. But I'll offer to your ruckus makers, when in doubt a great go to question, consider this like your seven iron if you're a golfer, like this is your go to club. When you have no idea what you should say or ask, simply pause and offer in humility. What else? And I remember being in Georgetown, at a Georgetown session during my training and then embracing and celebrating and advocating for what else.

38:05
Speaker 1
I'm thinking out of all this training, out of all the time I've invested, all the books on listening I've read, you're telling me that the win is what else? And it reminds me of a sad but endearing story of my buddy Ben, who has been a

coach for a million years, an entrepreneur. And I reached out to him and said, hey, I'd love your advice about how to become a better coach, which is to say how to become a better listener. And he says, let me tell you this story and I'll call the client Dan. So Ben had just endured the loss, sudden loss of a very close friend and had a client call with his client Dan the next day. Add to it, he was crushed with the flu. We're talking all the symptoms, the aches, the everythings.

38:55
Speaker 1
And so in his sorrow and in his physical pain, he just went to bed and crashed. He woke up the next day and he's like, oh my gosh, I've got a meeting with Dan in 15 minutes. And he's a long standing client, he adores Dan. He's like, okay, I don't want to cancel. So I got this, I can do it. But he shows up to this conversation and he tells me all I could muster up was my presence, my silence, and an occasional what else? And I suffered through that client call. I hung up, I went straight back to bed. I slept another 12 hours. I woke up feeling so guilty. It's like, I've got to call Dan right now and apologize to him. I can't believe I showed up and didn't honor that space with my best self.

39:44
Speaker 1
Well, he goes to send Dan an email and he has an email from Dan in his inbox. And the subject line says, what a session, exclamation point. And the body of the email said, hey, I know we've been meeting together for years and all of our sessions have been so helpful. I'm so grateful for our work together, but I must tell you, today's was transformational. Thank you so much for bringing your best self to my journey. And there Ben is like what? The legitimate F bomb, really. And it's just a great lesson to all of us as listeners. Again, it's not just you and I are professional coaches, so professional listeners. It's Ruckus Makers. I'm a professional listening leader. Partners. I am a committed listening partner. Parents. I'm a committed listening parent.

40:29
Speaker 1
At the end of the day, our presence, silence, giving them a space to get their own thoughts and feelings out of their head and make sense of them. Coupled with that king of all questions when you're in a pinch. What else? It's total magic.

40:45
Speaker 3
It's brilliant. You've used. We've kind of danced around the term a couple of times. Transformational listener. Next level listener. You mentioned in our intro call that your new book has an absurd subtitle. Can you tell us about.

41:01
Speaker 1
That? I love it so much. You know what I'd love to hear from the Ruckus Makers, which they prefer in terms of the main title. I'm flirting back and forth between Next Level Listening and the Listening Effect. And I lean towards the listening effect on many days because it speaks to the absurd subtitle. The subtitle of the book is how to Make More Money, how to have Better Sex. Thrive in your relationships, connect with your kids, elevate your leadership, win the next election and survive the zombie apocalypse. And the message is clear. You sprinkle the listening effect into any interaction you have, you know, from sex to zombies. And I guarantee those interactions will be leveled up. I guarantee it.

41:48
Speaker 1
It's been true in my own life, looking back on all the struggles, successes and failures I've had, the through line and bottom line always was I a good listener in that context or not? And in the moments where I showed up as a listener, the situations just thrived and when not, struggled mightily. So sprinkle the listening effect on anything. And I guarantee you a leveled up experience.

42:15
Speaker 3
This might be a question for another conversation, but it does beg the question when you mentioned that subtitle and what else?

42:24
Speaker 1
Totally, totally.

42:27
Speaker 3
There's just room for improvement there, right?

42:29
Speaker 1
Hey, absolutely. Yeah. It's innumerable. Innumerable. Sprinkle listening in. And I might mention it later, but a quote I like is that we don't talk or tweet or shout or shoot our way to a better world. We listen our way there. And that's better world, better school, better relationship, better home. You name it. Listening is what we're missing. I believe, and obviously it's my passion that I speak up for

listening now. But I think listening is long overdue to have its day in the sun. And I'm grateful to be one of many trying to bring that message to the world.

43:03
Speaker 3
Well said. Well, Bradley, if you could put one message on all school marquees around the world for a single day, what would your message be?

43:13
Speaker 1
This is such a hard question. You know what'd be fun is to survey your ruckus makers and to hear what they'd have to say. And you planted the seed with me. And I've been thinking about it a lot, and I keep coming back to a roomy quote. My favorite Rumi quote is out beyond all ideas of wrongdoing and right doing, there is a field. I'll meet you there. And in the spirit of listening, that field is where real transformational listening can occur. And the invitation is one of to drop our biases, our preconceived notions, to stop crafting the least magnanimous story about whoever it is in our world, be it a parent, a student, a coworker, partner, child, and to embrace the most magnanimous narrative of what might be going on in their experience.

44:14
Speaker 1
To embrace that if nurture were the same and nature were the same, I probably would have behaved the same. To get out past these ideas of wrongdoing and right doing, to sit with a soul and to truly hear and listen to their story. We stack up enough of those kinds of conversations in our schools, in our homes, around the world, and I think it would change everything. So on the marquee would be out beyond all ideas of wrongdoing and right doing, there is a field. I'll meet you there. And I just invite ruckus makers to try to embrace that spirit when they're sitting with that frustrated parent, frustrated faculty member, troubled child. To sit in the grace of that.

44:59
Speaker 3
Nice. As you build your dream school from the ground up, thinking that you're not limited by any resources, what are your three guiding principles for building a dream campus?

45:11
Speaker 1
So my three guiding principles would be relationships, relationships. And the first relationship would be relationship to self. To really invest in the spirit of

like you, Y o u, you, university. To really invest more personal development curriculum into our children's journeys so they would emerge from their time with us having a really understand, a really good understanding of self. Who am I? And I don't think there's a more powerful venue for that than school. So first relationship with self. Second, relationship with others. And of course, and you look at any school's curriculum and often many particularly high schools will have a public speaking class. Pretty hard to find listening curricula out there. So part of this relationship to others would be learning to listen to other stories.

46:05
Speaker 1
How do we interact in the sandbox that is the Earth to lovingly, generously, compassionately be in relationship with others. And then the last would be relationship to the planet and beyond. And that would include not only being a good steward of the earth, but also being a steward and a human soul that can start to begin to contemplate a relationship with that which transcends all understanding. Yeah, that what nature takes us to this transcendent place to begin to invest space and resources into what is beyond, just what's in front of our nose. So relationship to self, others and spirit and the planet would be at the heart of a school I would build. And they'd be super freaking expensive. They would be so budget unfriendly.

46:59
Speaker 1
Because at the end of the day, to really optimize the relational development of our children, we would need to train a number of adults to evolve in similar ways and have these skills in similar ways. And the reality is, you know, I do envision obviously smaller class sizes, et cetera, in the spirit of teachers as learning guides, et cetera, but beyond curriculum to also that inner life that they have. And that would require lots of amazing adults partnering with lots of amazing kids. So it would be expensive as heck because of course I'd also pay teachers, I don't know, about 10 times as much as they're paid right now. So my vision of a school might not be passed by parliament or by Congress, but we ruckus makers don't worry about those obstacles.

47:44
Speaker 1
We name the mountaintop and then do our best to climb and get there.

47:48
Speaker 3
And find a way. Of all the things we discussed today, what's one thing you want a ruckus maker to remember?

47:56
Speaker 1
My invitation is to little by little, bit by bit, step by step, embrace a disposition of being a listening leader. And so just offer you in that spirit, we talked about asking better questions, shortest possible preamble, one at a time, open ended, but really in particular to embrace speak less, speak last. And the spirit of speak less again, two ears, one mouth. No, no. 80%, 20%. And that goes for one one conversations, but also in our meetings. How much are you talking? I can almost guarantee you would be a better leader if you spoke less and then speak last in your meetings, one ones group, you know, team meetings, et cetera. My challenge to you to embrace a listening leader disposition is to actually seek to speak last. Put your idea forth last. Ask more questions, speak less, speak last. Ask better questions.

48:54
Speaker 3
Well, Rodley, I can't wait to check out your new book coming out shortly.

48:59
Speaker 1
Thank you. Thank you. No, I'm excited to share it with the world.

49:04
Speaker 3
I've really enjoyed our conversation today. Thank you for that.

49:08
Speaker 1
Thank you, Dan. Thanks so much for having me. Ruckus Makers, I'm cheering you on. Thanks for all the work you do.

49:16
Speaker 2
Hey, Ruckus Maker, thanks again for pressing play. I hope you enjoyed this show as much as I enjoyed recording it. And before you go, if today's episode shifted something for you where you want to do school different or you have a new idea about education, then I want to invite you to subscribe to Ruckus Makers. That's our newsletter and you get three new opportunities to do school different every week sent to your inbox. It's trusted by over 5,000 school leaders. And if you want to reimagine education within a traditional setting so that you could create a campus experience worth showing up for, subscribe for free at ruckusmakers News.

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