

On the Breath Podcast - Season 2 Episode 3 Transcript

[Nicky] It was a multimillion-pound dollar cookie stall, and that's really interesting because using the voice was one of the things that took it from literally nothing to multimillion. So it's very important.

[SJ] Thank you. Thank you. That's absolutely key. And it's also about what people's ideas are about a business, isn't it? Because we have ideas about what sorts of work or businesses will bring us the money that we're wanting to make. And often those ideas have nothing to do with the reality of what's possible. And I think you've just highlighted that.

[Nicky] Yeah, it were really interesting. And I think we'll point out...When you sell with sincerity, you sell people a feeling. Everybody knows that. But what we did in those days, it were Maggie Thatcher's years. Our Prime Minister and love her or hate her society then told single parents, low income families, that if they were who they were and we had to keep them, then they didn't have a place or a value in society.

[Nicky] So I didn't sell cookies, I didn't sell cakes, I sold belonging and validation to Maggie Thatcher's, young people who were literally not what the rest of society aspired to be. And, yeah, if I never do anything else in my life, SJ it were worth turning up at that market stall absolutely.

And there's so much that comes out of that story as well that I'm sure we'll also move into later on. But I think you wanted to start from where you were as a child. Tell us about that.

[Nicky] Yeah, so this is actually how I talk. It's not put on, it's a very particular accent, a place called Holmfirth in Yorkshire. And, I mean, I am a reflection of the barren hills, and just the gritty people, the landscape in which I was born. And of course, I'm going to speak like this. I'm not going to speak with a Berkshire accent. And we tend to speak from really down here. The old Holmfirth have got a lot of resonance.

[Nicky] But all my life, my mum married my dad. I think she thought she was the Duchess of all Holmfirth. It was very different. People had got strange paradigms of status and wealth, particularly in those days.

[Nicky] So, yeah, my mom and dad, they used to change the way they spoke. So one minute they'd talk like me, and then if somebody - we had a farm - if somebody came up the yard and they had money and status, they'd start to speak like this. And it had come

from a completely different place in the body and it had been jolly clipped, holding down the emotion, and I was fascinated by that.

[Nicky] But also, even at five years old, appalled because they used to go mental with me because I wouldn't play the game. And I used to watch all this playing out and think, nah, I am who I am, this is real and this will be me for the rest of my life. And you know what the funny thing is? People pay extra to listen to this voice. Now. Thank God I never changed. But of course, it was against a backdrop where people wanted us to speak Queen's English that came, it went along side by side with status and wealth and a place in society. Thank God all that's dissolving.

I've really tracked quite a change in the BBC voice, and then the regionalization of England and how people are speaking in media. And I think it's an identity and more of an expression of identity in how people are speaking. And it's also true that you can never necessarily, until you really get to know someone, tell where a person is from, because people will change their accent depending on where they live, but also how they feel they want to be perceived.

And I think your accent is a fabulous example of what many people would say, oh, that's a strong accent with tremendous clarity of speech. So the idea that you have to speak with a Southern English accent to have clarity of speech, or particularly a home county's accent to have clarity of speech, is bollocks. It's just about being really articulate through the word, which you are. Great example of it.

[Nicky] Thank you. It is complete bollocks. I get people saying to me all the time, but I've got a Hull accent, and I've got a Scottish accent. But you know what? Our bullshit detector is incredible. Now, we have changed as a species for lots of reasons. And whereas before, we would be hoodwinked and taken in by all that, now we just look and go, that's not you, you're talking shit. And even if you don't consciously think it, you actually subconsciously think it.

[Nicky] And we were all put on this earth as we are, in the environment that we were brought up in for a reason. Why would we want to dissolve that? And, yeah, when I come to stay in America for any long time, any length of time, I do have a slight American, because we pick it up. But actually, you know what? What we want these days is honesty and truth believability. And that is about your accent. And I'll finish that little bit by saying, look, who's in chuffin' charge of the way that we are perceived? Who is in charge of how we put ourselves out into the world? We are. And we forget that. So too many of us try to shilly shally and bend and change form to suit somebody else or to

try and curry favour. All you do is end up getting sidelined, and most sadly, sidelined by yourself most of the time.

It seems to me that I know that you're not thrilled with this word, so you might be able to think of another way of putting it, but that being one's authentic self, being your authentic self is really at the center of your integrity and your message and how you help people show up in the world as well.

How Covid Called Us to New Work in the World

[Nicky] Yeah. And I think that's quite a subject now, because, of course, we've just gone through COVID and we all sat here, didn't we? I've got this lovely office here and there's a balcony, and if it were daylight, there's a beautiful wood and a river. I sat for hours on there in COVID. We all did.

[Nicky] We all sat. And because we didn't have the stimulation of being able to jump in a nice car and go for a drive round or go put your nice jackets on and do that to make yourselves feel better, we all began to go inward. We didn't always like what we saw, but what happened was, for some of us, the real person was revealed or a perception of the real person.

[Nicky] So I don't think that we've ever had a chance, more of a chance in social history, to actually portray the reality of who we became to the world. I really do, Because I've had time to think about it. We've gone inside.

I think there's so much that's changed around that, particularly in really choosing who to spend energy with and who we maybe just need to be more separate from. I've seen a lot of people do that sometimes, friendships coming back together over the distance. I've had quite a bit of that. And then a feeling of, I just... No, no negative reflection on a person that you might feel less resonant with, but there's more thoughtfulness about, how am I engaging and who I want to engage with. Yeah.

[Nicky] How do these people make me feel? Absolutely. Let's face it, the divorce lawyers were busy after COVID, weren't they? They made a fortune.

Yeah. What I observed was that either people became much closer - I had that experience of deepening with my partner - or they separated. It was almost like I think there wasn't that much in between.

[Nicky] Yeah. I can't keep one for more than six weeks. So it weren't a problem for me. You'll have to tell me how you do it. One of these old days, there must be a nice American man out there that wants a nice redhead British girl. Anyway, I'll leave you all with that thought.

Well, I think I have the one. I don't have red hair, but yeah (smiling).

Nicky's Hero's Journey & Her Magical Ability to Sell With Sincerity

So you wanted to talk more about your full journey, and it, to me, is a very transformative journey. And when I heard some of it, I actually thought, that's a hero's journey. That was how it showed up in my mind. So I don't know if you perceive it that way.

And you were talking about your childhood, your experience of being able to sell, having the magic, in a way, of being able to sell with a lot of love, is what I was hearing. And then things that happened in your personal life. Would you like to share some of that.

[Nicky] Yeah, absolutely. And you see we're coming into a complete new era. In the 80s it was don't show any emotion, don't show any compassion, don't reveal yourself. Over here we have the Yuppies. It were all about that and I think that's so outdated now. What we need to learn to do is actually connect from here and really we do that instantly.

[Nicky] Instantly. I think it's within 4 seconds when we meet somebody new, 2 seconds in the written word and it's like our brains are trained now to do things instantly. We text this is instant, everything is instant and are our relationships.

[Nicky] But yeah, so I were always told I was stupid. I can't count particularly well, I can't organise things. My brain goes into total meltdown. There's a name for it, I'm sure, but I always had this thing right from being little where I would observe people and now there's no such thing as a chance in your life.

[Nicky] You are made up of all the pivotal moments where you could have turned left but you turned right where you could have married him, but you married him.

[Nicky] And all those things that happened to you have actually created you and they're worth far more than any university degree, I think.

[Nicky] So, yeah, I were always told I was stupid. And my first day at work, I went to work in a shoe shop and I could sell more shoes in one day than anybody else could sell in a whole week. I couldn't tell you how we did it then. Now I can tell you every wave of the hand, every flutter, honestly, of how we...

[Nicky] When I say we, I mean me and the girls that I worked with because obviously we teach other people to do it, it's not the royal we, but are we connected with people on a totally different level. And there was a pivotal moment there and everybody's got 'em if we think about them and it was me second day at work and a family came in called the Potters and I worked on the children's department.

[Nicky] So I sold young Andrew Potter a pair of shoes and we came upstairs and I'm printing through the till. Mrs Potter, she came up, she put her arm round me and she said where's your boss, darling? And I said she's over there. And I was thinking oh my God. I've only got to day two and I'm out. I were virtually packing me stuff up and she just turned to my boss and said this young girl, never get rid of her.

[Nicky] And my boss, Mrs Wardick, said Why? Because she's special. My son is twelve years old, he's down syndrome Andrew and his whole life he's only ever let two people take his shoes off and put another pair on.

[Nicky] One is me, his mother, the other one is this girl. And it gets me to this day. I started to cry. And I've not cried like that for a lot. I didn't know where it was coming from. But when I asked myself why, it was because somebody had given Nicky a validation for just who she was for the first time in her entire life.

[Nicky] And I'll be honest, that stuck with me. Everything is about validating other people, but it goes full circle. Or do we heal, like on the market stalls? We healed those young single parents, but I was in a rubbish marriage and very, very unhappy. I actually healed myself too.

[Nicky] And that's how the world works. So, yeah, I messed about in my 20s, got married to Johnny, then we had bought the market stall. I was 29 then and I noticed it was like going back to the shoe shop.

[Nicky] So I used to watch all these people in front of me and we created a way of being that compelled them to be there, but they were compelled to be there because we were 10% more expensive than anybody else selling the same thing. But the way we used our voice, the words, we used, the body language, the way we connected, we sold those people two things.

[Nicky] One was belonging. We're pack animals. A lot of people feel depressed and out of it because we've all been pulled out of the pack. And that's an interesting point. I could talk about how we create packs in businesses forever, made millions for businesses by doing that belonging and validation, because some of these young girls and low income families had been told by society and believed it, that they didn't have a value. I tell you what, they bloody well did when they were stood on my counter.

[Nicky] And that's how we did it. Not for now, but let's just say that things started to go really wrong in the marriage. But at that time, I lost my first little boy, Jackson.

[Nicky] I always knew I was going to lose him for anybody that's lost children out there. Four out of five of us were told, we knew. And Jackson went to nursery, they put him upstairs on a hot day in a winter suit and left him in a travel cot to scream, and he overheated and died.

[Nicky] And you're probably thinking, Why is she saying that? Well, because I am it and it is me. And I learned so much about the soul at that time. I actually learned so much about myself. And ever since at that time, and people, it like, fast forward me massively. I've got so much to thank that little boy for. Yeah. And so, anyway, long story short, how can I phrase this?

[Nicky] I'll just say it. Within a couple of years, my son had died, my mom had died, my dad had died, there was no money in the bank and no husband either. And I was in quarter of a million quids worth of debt. I lost everything and I mean everything, including myself, for quite a while.

[Nicky] You know what, I still had how we did it on those markets. And that has been, I'm not going to say the fortune, I've probably made millions. But I've got to tell you all now, I've spent many more millions than I've actually earned and I've loved every single second of it. So, yeah, there's no such thing as a chance.

[Nicky] People go through life and you either see tragedy or opportunity. You never come out of that situation the same person and it's up to you to choose. But it does come out on your voice. If you really listen to the vibration of people's voice, it actually does bring out some of the soul. And if you shut your eyes and just listen to people speaking, you really can tell who they are. You really can. And I think at that period of time as well, I think I did learn, automatically learn a lot about how to pick up from people's voice. And obviously, people got a lot of grief from mine, even when I were trying to be happy people....

So thank you so much for sharing that part of your story, Nicky. I sort of...The phrase that comes to me, and this may not resonate with you, but the phrase that comes to me is out of the ashes.

It's a real Phoenix story for me when I hear it, and everyone has the particular flavour of their story and this feels very dramatic and yet very real.

[Nicky] But everybody has a story. They do, and I love it. They'll say, Oh nothing ever happened to me. I was working with a High Court judge a couple of weeks ago and she had the most amazing story. I mean, literally, you could write a film, and she's going, oh, nothing's ever happened to me.

[Nicky] No, not really. But we're not the sum of our qualifications, we're the sum of our experience and how we reacted to it. So we need to look for the pivotal moments and express them, because it tells the world who we are.

Right. And does that tie into how you help people with what would you say with their brand, with... How would you frame that?

What I hear is that you're helping people also see about themselves what's really compelling and real lived experience.

[Nicky] Yeah, it's kind of evolved. After my demise, I went to work for a design agency, did £220,000 with the business in six weeks, learned how to modify what I have learned on the markets, use my voice down the phone to get meetings, to do all this business.

[Nicky] Then I set up on my own and I went into businesses and literally trebled overnight. Makeup, you name it. Honestly, bikes, you name it. Insurance, legal services, because it doesn't matter what you're selling, it's you they buy.

[Nicky] And it's how you tell the world who you are and resonate that people buy and lots of other things. But, yeah, then somebody said, Why don't you speak about this? So I did and I became a platform speaker and then it's funny, it finds you every single time. You never must worry about where you're going next in life because you become it first and then it finds you.

[Nicky] And I wanted to work all over the world and would you believe I started to work with companies and... who sent me people to do one to ones with and so that's very

much part of it. I can start at seven in AM in Australia and end up at nine at night in Los Angeles and I do that regularly.

How Nicky Works with People

[Nicky] So what do I do? I look at people and listen to the story, listen to the voice, watch the body language, look at the way they present themselves, look at the words that we use. A lot of people use trance phraseology which we have to wipe out straight away.

[Nicky] So let me give you an example of that. Well, let's go back to the shoe shop.

[Nicky] Are you all right there? Can I help you? No, I'm fine, thanks. So every industry has got its own trance phraseology and that means that when we know what is coming.

[Nicky] Hi, I hope you are well on emails. Kind regards. Would you like to take a seat? Can I help you? We know what's coming and we don't perceive it as real.

[Nicky] So we automatically delete the words and the intent before they get to our psyche. But not only do we delete the words and the intent, we delete the person saying it, and there lies the problem.

[Nicky] So we find words that are an energetic match and phraseology that is an energetic match to the people sat there and honest to God, it's like a magic stick, it's a magic... Thank God for for letting me think all that stuff up because it's so much part of my life.

[Nicky] So yeah, that's one of the things I do. And I work with over 40s women, it's Greater Later.

[Nicky] We're just getting all that set up, do online courses, they're brilliant. And I do a thing called Dissolving Disconnection, I'll get people to see you and listen to you within the first millisecond. And that's really important now because the world is on a default of no, no, I don't want your emails, no, I don't want to speak, no, I don't want a coffee with. And a lot of that comes from COVID not all of it, but a lot of it does. So it's opened the chuffing world out for me.

[Nicky] I could do anything I want now. I was 65 last week and my world is only just beginning. And the great thing is, had I only been 35, I could never have done this. I ain't bothered about age.

Transforming Stories of Disempowerment into Empowerment

Yeah, I totally relate to that. I'm 51 and I feel like my life is opening up in a way that it's like a renaissance. And a lot of that has to do with the Pandemic, but it's also just a readiness and where we are with consciousness and where I am, and it's opened up this work.

I wouldn't be here with you if it weren't for the pandemic. I wouldn't be coaching voice and performance in the way that I am with people who aren't actors, with people in business and entrepreneurs. It's entirely transformed my sense of the world and my sense of connection with people in other parts of the world.

[Nicky] Well, we probably wouldn't have listened to you in the same way if you'd have been 19. 19 has got so much to give, but not in the same way as we have. It's a completely different entry point into the world and a completely different expression.

Well, and thinking about everyone has a story. I realised one could look at my life and say, that was really dramatic and how did I ever end up going through that? But without that, I wouldn't be here either. I just don't regret anything. No.

[Nicky] Devils can often be angels in disguise, and I think that's brilliant. You don't regret anything. Well, we can. Devils are often angels in disguise and I can see that I wouldn't be who I am without all that stuff. 100%.

And I think that that also has to do with forgiving ourselves, because when we're regretting, we're saying we should have done something different, or if only I hadn't, or if only I'd realised. And then we end up being stuck in the past, as opposed to that possibly being a springboard for where we're going to go next.

And also about taking responsibility. Well, I did make that choice.

[Nicky] You do. But you do the best you can. Yeah, absolutely. At that time. And when you know, more you are more, you be more you make better choices. God, I've met some absolute bloody clangers, I'm not kidding you. But I did the best I could with what I knew at the time and my emotional state at the time.

[Nicky] Things are different now, but that's part of our evolution. And wouldn't it be boring if we all ate trifle jello, until we were 19, got a nice little job, married the boy across the road or the girl next door, stayed there forever, had two kids, nothing happened and we died. What would be the point of that?

Yeah, I agree.

I'd love to just take it into a more specific perhaps. I mean, you've been very specific, actually, but can you talk about a less or a least empowered moment with voice that you had? What I'm hearing is your empowered voice, but I'd love to just hear about a least empowered moment in your life.

[Nicky] Yeah, the odd moments of complete rejection because of the voice and that. I've got to say, it was my mother. And we all get moments that we never forget. And so we had show ponies. And there's a big agricultural show, the Yorkshire show, that we used to go to every year.

[Nicky] And my mom and dad were quite known in that arena and it was the night before and my mother said to me, I was 18 years old, and she said, Listen, tomorrow I do not want anyone to see you.

[Nicky] And absolutely I do not want anyone to hear you. And the day after, it was her birthday, 15 July, and I forgive me, Mum. It was all we chose, our parents. I'm sure she were walking towards me and I'd bought her a jacket for her birthday. And I were like this, and she was with a friend. She saw me and she put her head down and walked away.

[Nicky] She didn't have to speak to me, my voice wouldn't be heard by her friend. And I just remember being momentarily broken. We're only ever momentarily broken. But I will never forget that. I will never forget that. Very confused, angry, bemused. But, hey, come on. I mean, it was a moment in time. I could tell you 20 more stories of where I were on platforms and everybody has clapped and said, Keep talking. I could tell you 20 more stories about when I've been sat in America, in restaurants and people have come over and said, and I won't do it. I won't embarrass myself by doing the American accent.

[Nicky] I can, but I'm not going to do but all those people that have come over and said, ma'am, we can hear your voice. Will you please keep talking. Can we record you on our phones? And I'm going, yeah.

That was great.

[Nicky] Well. Light and shade in all things.

And that's why it can be so challenging to develop one's centre. But that's the only way through. And I guess we do that through the light and the dark of those experiences. What really strikes me in the story about your mother is what a rejection of herself that was to reject you in that way. That's just what comes to me. And that ultimately being at peace with it, as I can see you really strive to be, is your freedom from that situation.

[Nicky] And going back to the centre, we choose our own centre. You never let anybody else choose it for you. All the people that speak like me that I work with, I don't feel I can do that because of our talk well, I'm sorry, you shift your centre, as you would put it, because only you can, because it's just a paradigm.

[Nicky] It's not even true. Because if I am accepted with my voice, then everybody who talks like me is going to be accepted, so long as it's real and it's who you really are. Right? That's the thing, right?

The Secret of Selling with Sincerity is Genuine Heart to Heart Connection

And bringing that to a most empowered moment. You're touching on empowerment all the time in the conversation.

[Nicky] Well, I might get a bit emotional whenever they make the film in my life. So I'm set up as a speaker. I'm 46 years old and I got my first massive gig, and it was the Royal Armoury in Leeds. There were 500 high flying company directors and I were the keynote.

[Nicky] I'd never done anything like that before. And I had everything on little notes because I couldn't even remember my own life story.

[Nicky] I've got a picture of myself somewhere. In fact, the taxi driver, the cab driver wouldn't take the money because he said, darling, I won't do what you're doing tonight for anything, so it's a free ride. And I came out and I just said, look, got to tell you all, if I drop these speech cards, somebody at the front is going and they go over the stage, somebody at the front is going to have to pick them up and give them back to me, because otherwise this ain't going nowhere.

[Nicky] And they were all laughing and I were just very honestly telling people how I did it, how I got into those companies for those people. And it was about half an hour and I was very honest talking about my life. And then at the end, I walked to the front. I can see myself. I'm in my own body doing it now.

[Nicky] Got a black evening suit on, red cufflinks, a white shirt, hair, lipstick, the eyelashes, and I just stood there and I said, Right, got to tell you all, never done this before, so thank you, because I was born to be on this stage with this voice.

[Nicky] Thank you. And there was a half pause and they started to clap at the back and they started... They don't do this in England and absolutely in northern England. And then they started to stand up from the back to the front. And I was so hit by the energy of just love that I actually tumbled backwards.

[Nicky] I couldn't believe it. And I said thank you. If anybody wants to work with me, my friend is there. Get a card. And I wrote £7000 of work that night, and that is about 15 years ago.

That's a lot of money at that time.

[Nicky] And, yeah, I've had my ups and downs, but I never forget that moment, those pivotal moments in your life that make you and I guess that became a benchmark, because you want to recreate it and recreate it and recreate it, which I have. There's nothing quite like the first time, and it was back to the lady in the shoe shop, because it wasn't even what I was saying. People had accepted and loved me.

[Nicky] And that's something that some people never get in their own life. And I'm just very grateful that I did, even if it never, ever happens again.

I just want to emphasise, since most of my audience are American, that it's very, very striking how Americans in an audience, like in a theatre, will often give a standing ovation quite easily. But that is really rare in the UK. And you were saying, particularly in the North.

So when I hear it, I hear it as a really magical moment of love that you called out of everybody by being so vulnerable, but not vulnerable in a way that made them feel they had to take care of you. Vulnerable in a way that allowed them to meet you. That's what I hear in that, yeah.

[Nicky] And I like what you've just said there, because in actual fact, shouldn't every interaction, no matter how long or short, be a magical moment of love? And how is that created? It's created by the voice, the body language, the words that you say, the way you write, if that's it, the way you present yourself, shouldn't everything where we are on the planet, it's no less powerful for somebody that works in...

[Nicky] And I, you know, I do a fair bit of retail, so this this does happen. But when you get a customer and you have that, you know how to... And I don't mean this in any way, manipulating way, because all you want to do is to get them into a space where you have a proper quick relationship.

[Nicky] But when you can get those customers and you can disarm them so that we are letting each other momentarily into each other's lives, which we don't these days, that is equally powerful.

[Nicky] You know, Beyonce... She might stand up there and make 20,000 people feel better in a two hour set. Most of us can make 20,000 people feel better over a lifetime, but we've got to be very mindful that we do it one by one.

[Nicky] And it might just be that you pull up at the side of an old lady, probably me, at a bus stop with wobbly lipstick hanging onto a walking stick, and you look round and you smile at her and she looks and there's something in the eyes between you that this isn't the first time you met.

[Nicky] And that's no less powerful or no less meaningful than Beyonce or anybody or me on the stage, or any actor, anything.

Small acts of kindness have an enormous impact, and they make up the fabric of our lives. I think just when somebody waves you on in driving and says, Go first, which where I live, is rather unusual, just that sort of thing, or opening a door or saying, oh, no, sorry, let me help you with that.

I mean, when you think about it, these things happen all the time, but we do tend to emphasise a person who honked us, but all the time people are saying, I see your humanity along with all of the acts of not seeing each other's humanity. But I think sometimes those things aren't very dramatic, but they're so important.

[Nicky] They might not be dramatic, but they're equally as powerful. And you can connect with somebody when you use a particular tone in your voice instantly. And I want to just talk about this for a second.

[Nicky] So it might be somebody you've met. You only meet them once, but it's the difference between going 'Hello SJ' and 'Hello SJ! How are ya?' And the elongation and the fact that you speak from the heart to the brain with the tone.

[Nicky] I mean, I might not have done the very great example there. And for that moment, you're connected because we don't see each other anymore. There's eight and a half billion of us on the planet. We've just gone through a massive retreat. So many of us aren't out there yet. And to be able to instantly connect with people, it's not just about business, it's about life and who you are and how proud of yourself you can be of who you became. It's not about money.

Thank you so much for that, Nikki. I just love the way the conversation is leading into so much about everything. That's what I love about these conversations. I feel like doing the podcast is an opportunity for me to really sit and learn and connect. So thank you for that. This is a question that's a bit tricky, but it always brings up something interesting, which is whose voice do you love and why? And you can respond to that however you like.

Nicky's Favorite Voice

[Nicky] I always had a thing for Richard Burton's voice. Timbre. Is that the right word? He had such a lot of emotion in his voice and I don't know, his whole crazy genius came out in it.

[Nicky] His confused genius came out in his voice. But it was very compelling for me because although it was very rich and deep, there was always an air about it that you couldn't quite understand him. You were trying to work him out. Maybe just me, but amazing. A very emotive voice. Actually.

Seeing Camelot, which he was in, was one of the formative moments of me saying I was going to be an actor.

[Nicky] Right!.

Yeah. He's quite old at the time, but just amazing. And then Richard Harris took over. That's what I remember, anyway.

[Nicky] Yeah. And you know what? It's not too late. I would love to have been an actress. I mean, I'm not dead yet. I'm an actress without an act. That's how I would describe myself now. It's not about me as an act, but, yeah, I'd have loved to have been an actress.

So my next question is whether you have a question for me, because that puts me on the spot. So that's always something I ask.

[Nicky] Right, okay. So, right, the question I'm going to ask you, SJ, is can you ever have... oh well I've just fallen off my chair there. Can you ever just have a conversation with someone? Or are you always evaluating the voice, the delivery?

How Does Our Work as Voice/Speaking Coaches Affect Our Interactions?

Not at all. No, not at all evaluating. I can have conversations without that. I think that when I'm coaching, I'm very conscious because I'm modelling, so I'm conscious of pacing and then lift and then maybe a pause and then landing the idea for impact.

So that is a natural style for me. But I can become rather conscious of it when I know that I'm in it more of a teaching mode in daily life, not so much. And I just talked about this with Tanya Moodie, which is the last episode of the podcast, because she's Canadian born.

When I knew her, she had a Canadian accent. I'm half American and half English, and my accent has changed over time. So talking about authentic accent, when you come from different places, that can be a moving target.

So what sometimes happens is I become conscious that my accents changed and I'll go, how should I be sounding? Because I used to speak with an American accent. I used to speak with a Wiltshire accent when I was little.

So where am I? Is one of the things that can come up and I can become conscious of it. And I can sound much more transatlantic or even American, depending on what I'm talking about. So it's more that I'll notice something and then start to become conscious.

And I want to be clear in how I'm speaking when I'm doing these interviews. So there's a consciousness there in wanting to have clear communication, wanting to, as you do right, articulate through what you're saying and extend some of the vowels, because for me, that's a way to really bring the thought forward and it doesn't feel false, but it is conscious.

Whereas, oh, I mumble when I'm in my house, and if I've got my back turned, I'll be like, Why can't they hear me? I know I'm quite articulated. They'll be like, no, what was that? So it varies.

[Nicky] That's a great answer, but the question was actually, do you evaluate other people all the time? Okay. When I'm in a restaurant, I'm thinking, do you know what?

You just dropped your voice a little bit when you offered that dessert, you'd sell ten times more. So my radar is always on that with a question. Can you have a conversation outside of work without consciously or subconsciously evaluating what's going on?

Absolutely. If there isn't something glaring. So if somebody's not on voice a lot, I notice. And sometimes I have a... I mean, I don't know if I'm right or not unless I end up working with them, but I have a sort of a deep instinct about why in their history. Like, sometimes I'll just think, oh, I think that may have happened to them, or it's about this. So it's often about held voice or tension or sort of wounding. That's what I think I'm picking up. And I always want to be open to being wrong, but, yes, I will notice it.

And I'll notice if something's really pleasurable, a voice of an actor, there's a Korean actor whose voice just makes me melt. And I'm watching this in Korean with subtitles, but his voice is just... I'll notice pleasurable, I'll notice bound.

I won't notice too much if I'm just listening to what they're saying.

[Nicky] Do you know, that's interesting, though, what you've just said about you can pick up tension and the past in people and hurt. And I know I used to do it all the time, my bad times, my bad times. I still have to stop myself sometimes that I will speak from above the voice box or from it, so it might sound it, but I'm normally speaking from here.

[Nicky] And I know that I do that when I don't want to be hurt. I've never heard anybody else ever say that. But I know when I'm doing it and I consciously after... It doesn't happen often, but I know when I'm doing it and I'm the first person to say and you're right, you can pick it up in other people. It can be a protective mechanism. Hey. But I don't feel like I need to be protected today.

Oh, that's good. Yes.

I feel also an awareness of what comes up. So I teach voice and I help people have freer voices. And sometimes my voice isn't free. Sometimes emotion comes up and I don't want to feel that emotion. And I feel my throat tense right up. It won't stay stuck, but it happens because that's my physical response to a particular emotion that still hasn't been worked through in some way. Yeah, I like that you say that, because I always want people to understand that we're always learning. I will always learn.

I do not always have a perfectly on voice voice sometimes I'm aware of really holding my voice I don't want to express myself I feel like I need to make myself small I think the main thing is I notice it and it gives me a lot of information but it doesn't mean I don't do it yeah.

[Nicky] Oh, that's fascinating. I could talk to you about that for an hour that fascinates me because we quite often use the voice as a mechanism to hide

Oh yeah. And I can be a bit impassive at those times. I go into a kind of an impassive space when something might I feel like there's a very expected response required of me and what's happening inside is not the one that's wanted. And that's a familial thing that can happen. And I'll sort of go impassive. Clearly, I can be quite expressive. That's actually my more normal space but...

[Nicky] I'll have to pay you to teach me how to be a bit more impassive because keep me out of trouble a bit more.

I don't think you really want to be, though, do you, Nicky?

[Nicky] It's too bloody late now, I'll tell you.

The Power of Embracing Who We Are

Yeah, I mean as one gets older one is supposed to just be more oneself.

[Nicky] One is definitely oneself absolutely if this doesn't sound Harrogate-- Arrogant! Harrogate is a town! I've performed in Harrogate!

[Nicky] If this doesn't sound arrogant and I hope it doesn't. I hope nobody gets this wrong, because I have had me dark times, but I actually quite like Nicky. I actually get on with her. And in my great times of grief, this Nicky disappeared and I didn't know where she was, and even everything disappeared. And I really missed her because we all spend a lot of time with the Selves, don't we?

[Nicky] And I were at a party one night and something came out of my mouth that I had no control of, and everybody laughed. And I just thought, thank God she's back. Hello. Where have you been? I've missed you so much. And if that doesn't sound too crazy, I'm not for everybody. Nobody is.

[Nicky] But I would much rather be the woman where people either say oh I can't stand her, I can't stand her voice I can't stand her humour. I can't stand her... than sorry, who? Oh, I don't think I noticed her. And the thing is, it's absolutely true.

[Nicky] If we spoke to 100 people and 96 of them didn't care for us, that there was something about us that jarred 'em the voice, that whatever it was, but 4% of those people bought from us, made a friendship with us, liked us, accepted us into their world, we'd all be very rich. So we're never going to be for everybody. But who's in control here?

[Nicky] We think too much about what other people think of us. I stopped that years ago. It's very freeing.

Well, yeah, absolutely. I hope this is all right. I find myself going back to your mum. Right. So you already had a part of you in you that wanted to be yourself, and you had an example of what happens when somebody keeps trying to escape that. And I think you can't reach anyone, really well if you're not fully yourself. It also becomes a way of cutting out the people who aren't a good match by just being yourself.

Right? Not spending time on that because they've gone, oh, now I don't like how she speaks, or, yeah, she seems this, or she said, well, okay, moving on. Yeah, but they've not thought about it.

[Nicky] Y'know the old paradigm that if you speak like me, you're a bit dim. Well, I might be dim, but I still speak like me. And it is me. It's an old story that we were sold.

[Nicky] I love the Deep South accent. The American Deep South accent. That's why I want to marry an American, because when I shut my eyes, I'll always be in bed with Elvis, won't I?

[Nicky] Hold that thought. I love the American accent. I just love the glamour. It's a very glamorous accent. Of course, in England, like when all the American films were coming over. And if I'd have been anybody, I think I'd have been a GI bride, to be honest. But it was so glamorous and exciting and this big American dream that is encapsulated in the voice. I know it may not be real, but in our paradigm. It actually is. So all those messages that we're picking, well, there must be an agency that'd take me on somewhere that'd find me a nice...

I'm sure oh. There's many places online.

[Nicky] Yeah, I think that's where I'm going to be next while I've got my eyelashes on.

You just have to specify which accent is required.

[Nicky] Well, we never thought we were going to go to that place.

No, but I love it.

How to Work with Nicky

We're at that time where I'd love you to just share a bit about Dissolving the Disconnection Between Us.

Where can people find out about that and then Greater Later for Women Over 40, they both sound really great opportunities.

[Nicky] You know what dissolving disconnection? We're all disconnected at the minute. You go to a networking event, there's a disconnection between us. You meet a new customer, a new client. To be good is a given. If you're in legal services to be good is a given. People buy how quickly you can dissolve the barrier between you.

[Nicky] So I do this live event in England. I only ever take ten to twelve people in the North to start with, but I am going to do it online, I'm going to create an online version of it this next couple of weeks. And it's how to use your voice, your body language, even the way you dress to disarm people, and instantly fast forward that connection. And it's not for hoodwinking people, it's not at all.

[Nicky] It comes from a place of great love, those magic moments and great connection and it is instant. Miracles have happened. So that's one thing dissolving disconnection, but the thing that anybody can come to, well, so long as you're a woman over 40...

[Nicky] And we're about to do another free live one, I think it's in about three weeks, I can't remember the date, but I'll put it up there and it's called, it's Greater Later. And it's for professional women over 40, you don't have to work, but it's for a certain kind of person who doesn't want to wear the easy slacks and just make pies all day and have not a lot of ambition left. People that have still got shit to do, it's for those people.

[Nicky] But we all recreate ourselves, don't we, when we get a bit older. So it's how do we do that? How do we tell a story that explains us? How do we use our voice? How do we dress? Again, the body language and lots more. There's eight sessions over eight weeks and they always fill up. They always fill up and we have a laugh as well.

[Nicky] This particular group, well, they're from all over the world. We've got two Americans, two Australians. I mean, I'm blown sideways by the people, but we're all put together and we're all put together for a reason. So that it's Greater Later, let me

promise you, for anybody thinking...*"I'm getting a little bit the other side of forty"* It really is greater later because we're free to do whatever we want, and that's what it's all about how do you put yourself into the world?

Oh, that's fabulous. Website, Nicky? But really it's a very appealing offer. So where will they find this?

[Nicky] Right, it's going to be on my website. Do you know what? I love email, so I must stop saying so. If people just email me, nicky@nickypattinson.com, I love to speak to people, that's my greatest thing.

[Nicky] First thing, when I put my laptop on and I've got emails from people, that before I clicked open, I have no connection with, it could be anywhere, anybody of the 8.5 billion people on the planet.

[Nicky] Drop me an email, say hello and I'll tell you what's coming up. It is on my website, nickypattinson.com, but you know what? I like to talk to people, so drop me an email. And I'll put that in the notes below so you can see and connect with Nicky directly, which is a really fabulous offer. Well, what's the point?

[Nicky] It's not about the money, it's about the people that you meet.

And that's how come you're here. I reached out to you via email and I'm really happy that I did.

[Nicky] You know what I have loved tonight. Thank you so much and thank you everybody, for listening. For anybody that's still here, that started at the beginning, thank you. With all me heart, you'll never quite know what it means. You really won't.

Thank you, Nicky. Thank you so much. Thanks.