



Episode 90 - Building a culture of inclusivity with Katherine McCord

Catherine McCord (00:00:08) - Thank you. I'm so excited to be here today with a fellow octopus. Yes. This is perfect. Yes. Yes. Let's do it. Oh, my goodness. Uh, dumb people. The immovable people. Like that is my number one frustration. Are people who refuse to grow and to refuse to be flexible. That it makes no sense to me. It is counterproductive. It causes the biggest pains that we have in this world. And because really, if you think about it, like everything with inclusion, all that would be fixed if people would just be flexible and listen and respond and curiosity, not ego. So that is my biggest. My biggest frustration are immovable people. Oh, gosh. Um, you know what? If. If I can I try to have the discussion because sometimes people will come across that way, but they're actually not. And if they just are given an opportunity to really ask questions and get curious and all that and kind of, you know, expose that, that basic human need, then they'll do really well.

Catherine McCord (00:01:35) - And so I give people an opportunity if, if then it still doesn't work, then I either figure out a way to work with them in a project in which I absolutely must work with them or just get away from them. I mean, honestly, I've fired clients for that. It's just like, Yeah, yeah, you're just there's no point to this just by. There's just no point to you. Yeah. So that's. And sometimes you have to do that, right? Just fire the frustration. Yeah, right. Yes. Yes, absolutely. When you hit an impasse. And here's and here's what I tell people. You know, customer service is not what people think it is. People seem to be under the the misnomer that customer service means that you do everything your customer wants or that the customer just gets their way. No, especially not especially not in my line of work, because sometimes that's actually doing harm to

other people, right? So I work at people operations so they could be doing something that's actually harmful.

Catherine McCord (00:02:42) - So no, they don't get to have their way. So we, um, so what I do is, you know, like I said, I try to work through it, but when you hit that impasse, you, you feel it because you realize that there's no way forward. There's just kind of that moment of like where you just kind of drop in your energy. And when I feel that drop, I'm like, okay, that was it. That was the wall. That means that we can't go any further. That that was all the things. And I've gone down my checklist of trying all the things right? Um, now there's just nothing to be done. And so now we let it go. The other thing is, if you find an ethical difference between you and your clients, fire them. Yeah, right there. Fire them. If somehow you missed it in the discovery course, which can happen, it can. You know, you can think that there's alignment and you know all that.

Catherine McCord (00:03:30) - But you know, if you find that, get rid of them immediately right then and there because nothing good comes of that. So I'm so jealous. Good.

Else Kramer (00:04:04) - Oh. I love that.

Catherine McCord (00:04:19) - Yes, it should. That should just be how it is. But it's somehow not, you know. Yeah. Hank. And why is this shocking? Yeah. Why is this special? This should just be life. But it's so true. And I think a lot of companies think that they have that. I've started noticing that a lot of companies think that they prioritize their people. But the second that something comes to their attention and they hear, you know, Oh, this doesn't work for me, they go, Yeah, well, it works for everybody else, so we're just going to keep doing it. Uh, you know, that's not it. No, no, no, no. You know, or the bottom line comes into question, which, by the way, I. I've never seen a situation in my years of doing this.

Catherine McCord (00:05:09) - You're talking about a decade plus of doing this. I have not once seen a situation in which taking care of your employees would have broken the company or would have in any major way affected the bottom line. Not once. Yeah, none of that. Perfect. Yeah. Oh, you know, trust is everything. When you're in, people work you. If the people don't trust you and this is this is actually where a lot of companies fall apart. If there is no trust and if there is no psychological safety, which for anyone who doesn't quite know what that means, it just means that people have the ability to speak up, maybe even dissent to ask questions without fear of reprisal. All that means that's all it means. Um. Without those. It is massive but just needed. People think it's way more complex. Yeah, it's. It can be if you don't know how to do it. If you or if you're confused about what it actually is, you know, then it then it's then it's hard.

Catherine McCord (00:06:27) - Once you know what it is, it's not hard. So we just need to be teaching leaders this at the get go. Um, but it's trust is everything. If you don't have that, your company is broken, you know, if your, if your customers don't trust you or if your employees don't trust you or, God forbid, both, you know, you're in a downward spiral. So you need to be able to to build that up. And and the easiest way to do that is to. To have open communication,

truly, you know, the psychological safety to just truly steer into that, listen to people and, you know, applying feedback. That's that's what people miss. Like, oh, we got all this feedback, Yay, we're doing so good. No, you have to apply the feedback because when you do, then even people who didn't send, you know, the feedback that something needed to change will still see that you care enough to pivot. When your people tell you that there needs to be a pivot and that builds huge trust.

Catherine McCord (00:07:31) - I had that in a team of my very first saw this very firsthand when I had one team member that said, Hey, you know, this really isn't working for me. You know, I need help. I need to figure out a different way to do this. And so I pivoted what we were doing, and I opened up the door so that some people could still do it this way. Some people could do it that way. We found a way to make it work. And what was interesting was not so much the response and gratitude from that person, but the rest of the team coming to me and going, We think this is great, thank you so much. And then you know what started happening? They started speaking up more. They started trusting me with more information and when something was going wrong and they were feeling scared or they were feeling like there was a better way to do something, they would just come up and tell me about it. And so the what I tell people is very publicly respond to this feedback and thank the person who gave it to you, thank the person who said this could be better.

Catherine McCord (00:08:30) - And it goes world. Yes. Yes. Oh, God. Yeah. Well, first of all, I am a huge supporter of the idea of removing the accommodation accommodation process as it exists and just making accommodation standard options with like a fill in the blank. So here's. Yeah. Like, here's the things I just need. Yeah. Here's. Yeah. Here's the features. Yeah. That's it. That's what it is. And it doesn't ultimately cost the company more money. And I have all the data. If anybody wants that, they can contact me on this. No, that's what I'm saying. It does not. No, it's not. No, no, it's not. So here's very briefly. I'm going to give the run next. You're right. I do need to elaborate a little bit more than that. Right. Um, so first of all, the Department of Labor, the Department of Labor, the US Department of Labor recently did a study that showed that 56% of accommodations do not cost any money at all or cost the exact same as what you're going to spend anyway.

Catherine McCord (00:09:46) - Right. Um, then an additional something like 15 to 20% somewhere in there. Cost cost about 5 to \$10. So very, very cheap. But also what happens is when a person needs something more expensive over here, they might want something less expensive over here. So it will also balance out. Then you have the consideration of them calling out retention. All of this, when you filter all of this in, you actually save money by just building in the accommodations. And I want to say want to give a shout out. Build in your accommodations because it saves you money. It's so true. It's so true. And it's it's funny. And then your people are happier. They're more productive, they're healthier. They're at work more than ultimately your customers are happier and then you make more money. So it's this wonderful little trickle of thing. And a company, one company that's rocking it. If anybody wants to just go and see what this actually looks like, um, go to inclusively is the name of it.

Catherine McCord (00:10:50) - And it's a kind of a job search, you know, place. But you can fill out a profile and then you can go in and ask all these different accommodations and then there's a fill in the blank. And it's very. Yeah, it's like, yeah, constantly. And I don't, you know, I don't know if it's because they heard me speak, but I do know for a fact that some other people were at one of my speeches. And so I'm like, I'm not sure if I'm going to take credit for that, but I love that they're doing it either freaking way. I think it's phenomenal. Um, they are, they are rocking it. They what it is, is you give the suggestion. So here are some things that we just offer standard. Here's just some things that we thought of, but also here's some where you can fill in the blanks. Um, and it removes the stress, it shows inclusion. People can yak all they want to and people are like, Yeah, right, You're still going to discriminate against me, you're still going to do it, you know, whatever.

Catherine McCord (00:11:47) - Um, then you have the problem too, that a lot of people don't know how to take care of themselves. Because they've not been taught. Taught to. They've not been told that that's okay. So they don't know but then know. Yeah, exactly. And but when you show them that it is and you give them suggestions, then it's like, oh okay cool. Now if it is something expensive, you know, if it is something complicated, still simplify the process, please. This is nonsense of multiple steps and weeks and months of back and forth. No very simple process, just one sheet that they need to fill out. And you don't really stop being nosy to. Let's just throw that out there. You don't really need to know the why outside of the fact that it's a medical issue, right? It's just a very broad scope why you don't need the specifics of this person's diagnosis. That's not your business. All you need to know is that, yes, they do actually need it to work more effectively and so on and so forth.

Catherine McCord (00:12:45) - That's it. That's that's all you need to know. So stop being nosy also, because it's so weird. So weird to be that nosy. Yes. Yes. That's ridiculous. It's perfectly reasonable. If something is going to be expensive to get a doctor's note saying, yes, this is actually required because of a medical diagnosis, that is perfectly reasonable. Um, but what is and to also then counter. So let's say they're asking for a particular brand. Well, if you find the exact same thing that accomplishes the exact same thing, but it's less expensive, that's reasonable. That's part of the reasonable part of reasonable accommodation. So you have every right for that. But let's stop being nosy and be like, So tell me everything about your diagnosis so that I can understand why. No, that is. That is not your business. Yeah, not your business. Oh. Oh. Presents like that one a long time ago. So my my husband and I, in a land far, far away, actually kind of is now I'm in Florida and this was in Texas.

Catherine McCord (00:14:06) - Yeah, it is kind of a far, far away. Um, so I had the privilege of multiple times in my career working alongside my husband. We have been coworkers. I've been his boss. He's been my boss. Every capacity you can think of. Yeah. And we and we're one of those rare couples that just thrives in that circumstance. It's yeah, it actually, it was strengthened our really just the way that we are as unique humans that actually worked well for us. Um, so he is one of the most brilliant managers that I've ever had the privilege to watch. Oh, he's also been a client. I've worked for a client of mine, so we worked together in that capacity too. Um, and he taught me the importance of being what he called in the dirt with your people. Right? So getting

in there and working with them. And I think that's what a lot of managers miss their very present. You know, they'll come by this. Hi. Like physically speaking, you know, they'll say hi, they'll they'll be visible.

Catherine McCord (00:15:12) - Right. But visible is not the same thing as presence. Really. A presence is. I am sitting with you. I am here. I am experiencing this, you know, with you, whether it's in the same way or not, you know, I'm experiencing this thing with you and that's what I think a lot of leaders miss, is the presence of I am here with you right now. And that's the thing. And so as people are going through different things, it's important that A, you're helping with some of the work managers in terms of I'm talking about executive leadership, but hands on managers need to always be still doing the work. At least 5 to 10% of your time should still be doing the work of your people so that you're staying in that same world with them and so that you understand what's going on with them. You cannot truly lead the humans in a very direct way if you're not also doing the work right. Um, and if I have a funny story on that though, uh, so, so, so a while back I had forgotten this, right? I was, I was working for a large company.

Catherine McCord (00:16:25) - I had kind of forgotten this lesson because I was, you know, had the excuse of I was, oh, so busy doing these other things right. But I forgot this, the importance of it. And so sure enough, some of my people, I called them out on something that they had stopped doing that they had been doing, which was responding to candidates in a timely manner. That's a bugaboo of mine. You got to do it. Got to respond to them within 24 hours. Yeah, exactly. Yeah. And they had trailed off, right? And was like, Yeah, no, that's not gonna work. And this is the response that I got. Well, you're over here in your office doing manager stuff. You don't know what it's like for us. And in my mind thought, you know what? Ultimately, they're calling me out of my obs. So okay, So I made a deal with them and I said I said, okay. So. I'm going to do my job.

Catherine McCord (00:17:13) - And yours work no more than 42 hours this week. So this is a Monday, no more than 42 hours This week, all of my candidates will have this response. And if I have not submitted as many, you know, if I've not met the submittal, you know, base, and if I have not responded, then you win and I will stop bothering you about this. I will by whoever gets more submittals than me, lunch, so on and so forth. And like, okay, well, what do you get if you went? I said, You buy me lunch and then you do what I just said because I know you know how to do it and I know that you can. And they said, okay. At the end of the week, I really enjoyed my double cheeseburger. My. Huh? Because. Prove that I could still do it. But that reminded me that I needed to be in the trenches, right? That I needed to be with them and still participating.

Catherine McCord (00:18:00) - So I made a point from then on to still take on 1 or 2 roles for myself. Not the full load that that was made for a crazy week for me, but to still keep 1 or 2 so that they understood that I was still right there with them and think that that's. That's right. So there you go. That's my story about being present. Yeah. Um. Well, right. Yes. And that works too. Yes. Yeah. Yes. Yeah. 100%. And. And so, yes, the executive that's what that was beautifully done because the executives. Still need to do it, but it just will be to a little bit lesser extent because they have a different a different job. Right. It's a different it's a different job. But

stay in the trenches. Be present. Yeah. Yay! Money. Well, yeah. Badly? Sadly, yes. We do need it. I dream of a day when Seth Macfarlane's manifestation of what our universe should be as presented in his show, The Orville will one day come to pass where your contribution is your money.

Catherine McCord (00:19:34) - That would just be beautiful. I, I would be ecstatic if that's how that works. And people are like, well, ultimately that's what it is. No, because there are things that contribute very highly that pay very low, like teaching. Right? Yeah. Yeah. No, it's not the same thing. No. Nope. That is not it at all. Um, but that. That is my ultimate dream. But right now, our world is that we do need money, right? We do need currency. So how to get more of it? Treat your people better, first of all, and then start being flexible. I see. I've seen so many companies just sink over the years because they would just be so bullheaded that things had to be done this way. You know, the product should be this, you know, and they didn't stop. And or they might even innovate, but not in a way that anybody ever asked for, needed or wanted. Right? Like just this this weird thing that they decided to do.

Catherine McCord (00:20:39) - And so it just doesn't work. It doesn't you have to listen, get feedback or get respond to that feedback. Interesting how this just keeps circling back. But in everything in life, we have a theme, you know, listen to feedback. It's the same thing in relationships, right? Everything. Listen to feedback except the feedback. Pivot with the feedback. Be flexible and that's it. If you want to earn more money, be flexible. I tell people all the time, I the most money I've ever made has come with flexibility and every time my income increases, it's because I just roll with it and like, you know what this looks like it's going well. I'm going to steer into that and I'm going to get more money. It like, that's and it just works out. It just works out. So so pivot constantly. Um, and another one of this, this does surprise people when I, you know, being from the recruiting, recruiting background when I advocate for this job hop.

Catherine McCord (00:21:41) - Don't just like that. You like that. Just don't just stay at one job because it's you. Because what happens is you get in a rut and then you start to get, you know, get stuck. And don't mean you have to necessarily hop companies, okay? You can hop jobs within the same company. That's the thing, right? Yeah. So you could be flexible so you can stick with your company and still learn and change and do things and and all that kind of stuff, but be flexible. That just brings so much growth. And if that's not who you are as a person, fine, great, whatever. But if you're trying to pursue more money and more growth, that's what you do. Job hop. Yeah. Yeah. Oh, yeah. So. No. Yes. Yeah. No. You know what makes you reliable? Being. Being reliable while you're at the job. Like, okay, don't be flaky while you're at the job. That's what makes you reliable.

Catherine McCord (00:22:52) - Like, that's it. Um, I've hired people who had 6 to 9 month stints at each previous job, which is a little low. Do want to say that that is pretty low. Um, that is lower than what I'm talking about. But once I got them in the door, they were spectacular. And. How do how do I hire? So actually, some of it's instinct. I have a natural ability to truly read people and even see past, you know, the things that they're trying to hide and all of that, um, does a gift. So

in a way, it's hard for me to teach other people how to hire like me because some of it's just completely natural and you're just, you either have that or you don't. Um, so, so there is that element. But the things that I do to set that up for success and the things that I've taught other people to do, number one, stop hiring for years of experience. That's the most utterly ridiculous marker that is out there right now.

Catherine McCord (00:23:58) - What you're looking for is expertise in something, and it doesn't even necessarily need to be exactly what you're hiring for in most cases. In most cases, there are exceptions to that. Um, but in most. It's flex and flexibility. There it is. That's that's the thing. But that's it. So stop hiring for that and don't create candidate profiles. So people do this thing and sometimes it's done separately. Sometimes it's done inside of the job description where they create the ideal candidate profile. That's counterproductive. That's completely counterproductive. What you've just done is told your brain, this is the only correct answer. If it's not like this, this isn't. And people go, No, I'll be flexible. No, you won't. You think you will. But your brain has already been told what the correct answer is. So in. Yes. Yeah, yeah. And that's where you get the people that also drag on. And maybe eventually they do open up their mind to something else, but it just takes way too long and then you ultimately lose the candidate anyway because they took forever to, to wrap their little minds around it.

Catherine McCord (00:25:06) - So instead of that focus on solving the problem, like this is the problem that I need solved, who can do that? And just however that looks, because sometimes it will come from the craziest background that you can possibly imagine, right? It just, you know, who would have thought that a person with, you know, strong restaurant experience, who worked for a travel a sports travel company who had also run a doggy daycare and then had had worked in collections, help people get out of debt, all of that would become an international speaker and people, operations consultants and become a very public figure for inclusion in HR. That person is me. I mean, it's just who would have thunk it, right? Like this person with this crazy ass background. And yes, I did briefly work for recruiting company for exactly one year before breaking into to what I do. And the part came from experience. I had building what was essentially that wasn't my title, but building out h.R. And other roles handling it.

Catherine McCord (00:26:17) - That's where all of that came from. Um, and then of course, a lot of reading and knowledge of laws and, and that kind of thing. But it, that's it, it's, you know, I had my mother who is a phenomenal professional, started off as an RNN and just had a knack for it. So they moved her over to recruiting and moved her into a full on h.r. And so and she had no formal education for that. She had a formal education for being a nurse, but not for for recruiting. So, you know, just look for someone who has the talent and the skills already built up and who has seen similar problems and doesn't need to be exact. Um, that can, that can take care of it for you. It's really that simple. Look, it's a problem solving position and think that we forget that. I've heard of it. I've not read it. Right? Like. Like what? Yeah. Yay! God. Oh, God. Okay.

Catherine McCord (00:27:50) - Well, first of all, since we were just talking about hiring, I'm going to point out that formal education is rarely actually needed. Like, look, if you're going to be a

lawyer or a doctor, you need a formal education. Yeah, please, God, if you're a doctor, get a formal education. But but outside of that. Outside of that. No, that's. That's not a thing that's needed. It's it's it can be nice, but it, you know, makes sure that you're not focused on that because you can get that same knowledge with the Internet. You could get that same you know, I learned I learned all the legalities of from my mother and the Internet, you know, like that's that's how I got that education. So you don't need a degree for a lot of these things anymore. Um, and then so let's talk about. Oh, my God. Oh, yeah. I sat there and I had a client company who got students out of debt. That was their.

Catherine McCord (00:28:51) - That was their thing. And good Lord God, the amounts of debt that I would see and with degrees that had no hope of ever paying that back. Like none. Yeah. No, no, no, no. Like, literally, literally, this is one of their clients had a had an art degree. Okay. And \$110,000 in debt. How is that person ever going to pay that back? What let them that who lived in that? Like, in all sincerity? Like what? Like that? No, that's just irresponsibility, which is ultimately how they got the debt removed, by the way. But it was it's crazy, right? It's just crazy, the educational system. Is messed up. It really is. And people go, Oh, it's so easy to say, What, you don't work in education. Yeah, well, I'm surrounded by educators and they all agree. So we're just going to go ahead and go with the idea. Every single one of them without fail. I have not met a single educator that's like, yay! Our system, especially here in the States, is so great.

Catherine McCord (00:29:56) - Yeah. Yes. Yeah. And it's different problems, right? Yeah. Oh, God, yeah. It. God forbid you learn differently or you have to. You have a lot of energy, you know? And what is this with making kids sit still? What is that like? What? How? That's not a natural thing. First of all, humans should not be sitting that still, period. Don't care what age you are. Um mean my 80. Right. Exactly. My 89 year old grandma swears to the fact my Mimi swears to the fact that part of the reason she's so healthy is that she always stays in motion. And I completely agree with her. She is 89 and she can run circles around here like she's glorious. She's absolutely fascinating. But this, you know, making kids sit still, insisting that everybody learn the same way, that just doesn't make sense. Their mind doesn't work that way. Um, and then, you know, and I this is going to sound like I'm blaming teachers, but I'm not.

Catherine McCord (00:30:58) - So let me finish the thought because I feel like because I know this is going to come off really bad. Right? Yeah. Yeah, yeah. So the, the teachers though, what is happening and I do somewhat hold them responsible but not 100% is that you're seeing a lot of burnout but then they're staying with it. So then they're grumpy and then they're getting like then the attitude shifts and then they're not a good teacher anymore. Right? And so again, it's not their fault that the system sucks. And I love their passion for what they do. But a lot I've seen a lot of burnout. I can't deal with this. Then the frustration grows. Um, and so a lot of teachers are now catching that and they're leaving. And so now it's like, Oh no, what are we going to do without teachers? Well, maybe treat them better and don't make their First of all, why are teachers paying for supplies? That makes no sense. Second of all. You know, like.

Catherine McCord (00:31:56) - I think like a watch. The first time you ever hear that, you're like, that can't be common to all of them. Every. All of them. Yeah. Oh, yeah. So this is something I

found out about a while back. Again, I'm surrounded by teachers, family, friends, you know, actually colleagues of mine that work in education. And I was one of the people who really opened my eyes as to why this happened is Jerry Johnson, fascinating education consultant. She has a wonderful book, by the way, called Imagine That. That's full of funny stories about kids that she's, you know, either taught or been the principal of over the years and the crazy things that their parents do. Great book check it out on Amazon. Um, but the reason that this happens is that they run out of budget, but then they also know that in public schools the parents can't afford it. And so then here are these teachers. If I want to teach effectively, I just have to pay for it.

Catherine McCord (00:32:53) - Which is insane because you have, what, like 25 kids to a room or some nonsense like that. And so then for 25 kids and assuming that you only have one class, you know, but when they're younger, maybe you're in high school and you get a new classroom, you know, every and then they're having to pay for this to be able to teach effectively. That's insane. So they they have a salary. But then take out, you know, ten grand or so. And this is the number that I've been given by multiple people. Across our country and in Canada. Um, that around ten, ten grand a year, 5 to 10 grand was the the range. So 5 to 10 grand of your salary just gone to pay for something that should be being paid for, uh, by the public education system. It's, it's insane. So. And wouldn't that make you kind of resentful to, like, wouldn't you be like, well, great, now I can't pay my electric bill because had to pay for these freaking school supplies.

Catherine McCord (00:33:54) - Yeah. Yeah, it's nuts. Um, but this also leads back to so I've known some teachers that tried for creative alternatives and were shot down because it wasn't as measurable. It wasn't? Look. First of all, standardized testing is dumb. Let's just put it out there. That is the word for standardized test. They are dumb. We need to get rid of them. Some of the most intelligent people. Okay. Okay. Right. Oh. All right. Well, first of all. First of all, um, let's start with we don't need SATs and all that. Okay? Look, you if you want to get into a certain type of school, they can have their own tests you take to get into that school. Okay? I'm talking about getting people out of high school. Just the basic primary education. So Harvard wants to have or whoever wants to have their own admission process have at it yay for you. But even so, presented in different ways because some people are just really bad test takers.

Catherine McCord (00:35:02) - One of the most intelligent people that I know brilliant, taught himself to be an architectural engineer. Okay, taught himself, is wildly successful, leads a these huge projects all over the country for his company, uh, can't pass a test to save his life because it just the anxiety behind it and just the way that the information is presented, it just doesn't work for his brain. Um, so. Yes. Yeah, right. Yeah. Like. Like you just go down the rabbit hole, right? I saw a beautiful response from from a little kid at one point that was literally a whole page of answering what could have easily just been a one sentence response because he went down the rabbit hole. Right. But he was right, you know, but he comprehended it. So that's the other thing is learning to shift what answers need to look like. You know, it doesn't need to be you know, you see all these funny answers that kids give on tests and such. And I'm like, you know

what? If a kid gave me that answer, they would pass because they still get the basic concept, They still get the concept right, and they're showing that they're learning.

Catherine McCord (00:36:22) - They're just so over here on this little, little spectrum. I also. Yeah, exactly right. Which I love. Mean sassy kids would get so many. Like so many bonus points for me. Um, that's my little bias. I like sassy kids, but you know, the grading. So the test, the way that you replace it is, is understanding concepts and whether somebody needs to verbally communicate that, you know, so you could just look at somebody maybe they like open new questions and you could say, explain to me what you learned about the Civil War. Bam, Open question. Right. Or it could be this person needs a more detailed account and you could just say, okay, so what fact was this? What fact was it? You know, and that's. Yeah. And you know what? Ultimately, years and stuff don't matter. That doesn't matter. What did you learn from this? What did you learn from this war? What did you what do you understand about the history of this country as it pertains to the you know, that's you know, that's the thing.

Catherine McCord (00:37:21) - Um, but measure it in different ways. Um, if a kid, you know, steering steer into success and then, you know and you'll it support kids going in a direction that makes sense for their brains, you know and yes you still need to learn the other stuff too. But focus, you know, over here where it works for them. But then also. Yes, exactly. Build that confidence up, Let them see that they can succeed exactly as they are. It works, trust me, even with adult humans. Um, but then the other, the other piece of it is, um, you know, it just focus, bringing it back to the learning and removing. So in the US, I don't know if this is true in Holland or not. There's this really messed up system where the schools that succeed the most on these standardized tests get the most money. Well, here's the problem with that. They don't need it. They're doing fine, like so. They keep doing better.

Catherine McCord (00:38:27) - And then these other schools, you know, the teachers keep not being able to afford supplies. Yeah. And it's messed up. So instead, how about we just. Yes, it makes no sense. It makes no sense. So it should just be if your population is between this and this as a school. Right? As a school, this is how much money you get. Period. Yeah, this is it. This is what you need? Yeah. With all the supplies, no teachers having to pay for anything. You know, all of this. This is what you get. And that would work out so much better. So that's the other thing in education that's super broken is that the way the budget is distributed is just jacked up and just at least and again, I don't know about it, you know, in other countries, but here in the States, it's just really backward. It just doesn't make sense. Yeah. Oh, God. Okay, so you're. You're opening up a soap box.

Catherine McCord (00:39:35) - So here. Yeah. So here we go. I have done extensive work in this, including going specifically to conventions and playing with every test out there that I can find going online and taking them. Yeah. Yeah. Because that's how my little octopus neurodiverse brain works. Um, you know, I have reached out to companies outside the US and have asked them to send me a link so that I can test out their stuff. Number one, uh, let's. I'm just going to put this out there. Every single personality test out there is really just an are you dumb test because there's so obvious and I'm talking about just the personality one. It's not the

skill based right. And not how do you learn not those tests, the strictly personality. It is very obvious. What is it? So it's it's the. Are you. Yes, exactly. So it's either the are you dumb? It's basically the are you dumb test for most people. Unfortunately, what it turns into for people with neurodiverse brains because there are whole populations that just lying is just not natural to them.

Catherine McCord (00:40:46) - So they'll actually pick. Yeah, they will actually pick. Yeah. Right. Yeah. I know so many people that way and so they'll be honest. And so then you're punishing honesty, you know, because the company is looking for this like super pro company, not necessarily even the most, you know, integrity filled answer or anything like that. Yeah. Or, or the other thing that happens in the Neurodiverse community is that there are more than one answer that applies. And so they just break and they just get stuck and they're only allowed to pick one. Yeah. And they're only allowed to pick one and don't even like that. Like that. I can choose, but I'm just like, man, this doesn't, this is stupid. Yeah. Because really these two things should be chosen, you know, it's just not the best way to do it. So number one, they're not effective. They're just not. Not for anybody, ever. Because you're encouraging lying in the group that will lie.

Catherine McCord (00:41:43) - Then you're then you're then you're just going to get pure honesty out of the other ones. But you're also going to punish them for that. Um, you know, or you're going to say, Oh, well, that wasn't the best answer. Right? Well, because here's the thing. They'll do something. You're asking them for the best answer. Well, did you ask them why that was the best answer? Did you ask for clarification? Because maybe their answer actually is the best and you have it wrong. You know, So it's just it just doesn't work. They're they're broken by nature. Um, they're horribly inclusive. I mean, even from just the way the questions are asked, they're horribly inclusive. Passive. Oh, yeah. Oh, God, yeah. Um, now, however, comma, there are wonderful tests that once you are onboarded or, you know, being onboarding, you sign the offer letter. All of this. Once that happens, there are wonderful tests to help you learn how to best communicate with your new team member and how to best teach your new team member.

Catherine McCord (00:42:45) - There are wonderful tests out there for that. Yes. Yes. Yeah. Yeah, don't abuse it. Just take it at face value. Just learn a little bit. And there are a few others out there. There. The, the, the names are eluded me right now. Um, but they. Yeah. Yeah, Right. So there you go. Well, I'll circle back. I'll circle back. Um, it really. But those, those tests can be wonderful. They can be absolutely wonderful. And I'm often and figuring out people's goals and what drives them. Uh, that's another great one. Because when you understand what motivates people, you can teach them, you can work with them best, you'll help them succeed and be excited about their job. Super pro, all of that testing. And I and I have run into some that are about as unbiased as you can get. And like they like they're really trying. You can tell that they're trying and they take feedback. There's one in particular that I actually did a consulting session with and they took that feedback, man, and they, they started implementing it and was like, Thank you.

Catherine McCord (00:43:59) - They get flexibility, you know, flexibility. Um, so I will, I will get you the names of those companies. The flexibility, and I will. And everything. I will get you the names of all of these and links to to everything to you, by the way, so that anybody who's listening can find this. Uh, no. No, no. You just talk to the human. Yeah. No, just talk to the human, figure out, can they do the job? Figure out, are they the right ad, not fit for your company? And let me ad not fit. And not just culturally, but even with their talents. What you're looking for is an ad, So, for instance, there is not a higher performer than me. It's never existed. Any company I've worked for been at the top every single time. It is what it is. But you don't want a whole bunch of me like that. Sounds counterintuitive, right? Well, you're super high productive.

Catherine McCord (00:45:07) - Oh, God. Save. Don't want to work with a team of me. That would be terrible. Um, you need and I'll give a great example. When I was in debt settlement, I was at the top, and. But there were certain clients I just could not work with. I just. There was too big of a clash. And I was too young to. To have learned how to better deal with that. There was it. And it just I just wasn't the right fit for certain people. Right? So we needed other personalities, right? And so I had this beautiful, harmonious relationship with the person who trained me. It was another just very influential person in my growth, both as a human and as a professional. And he was not good at keeping his task current. He was always behind in his work, always. But he was really good with difficult humans and with getting them to, you know, to to calm down and to hear him out and that kind of thing.

Catherine McCord (00:46:02) - So what we did was we switched. He would take on the client that I just couldn't stand for whatever reason, and I would keep him current. And we had this beautiful, harmonious, really add I was an add to what was already there. It worked beautifully. We got another woman who came in who was the most gentle, like mom, energy, mother, Earth person, and she was very lovely for a certain type of clientele. But but she had to hand off certain clients to other people who needed more of the kick in the butt. You know, that kind of approach. Again, an ad, right? So that's what you're looking for is to add to your team, not to just keep duplicating the same old, same old. You know, I hear companies. That, too. Yes. I don't. God, yeah. People, you know, get asked all the time. Oh, you're almost at 20 years, you know. How did you how do you do that? We compliment each other.

Catherine McCord (00:47:04) - He adds to my life. I add to his life. That's how that works. There are many areas in which we are vastly different. Of course, there are similar areas as well, but we add to each other's lives. And that's the thing, you know, you can it works better when there's an addition to same thing with sports teams, right? You know, like people always talk about, for instance, you know, love hockey. So they always talk about Wayne Gretzky, you know, but they don't talk about the guys that kept him safe. Ice hockey. Sorry. So, yes, so an ice hockey. So so Wayne Gretzky is like indisputably they call him the great one. Like, you know, that'll give you a good, you know, like. Yeah, but then they don't talk about guys like Marty McSorley, you know, and, and, and folks like that that stepped up and kept all these goal scorers safe. You know, they call them the guardians of the ice.

Catherine McCord (00:48:02) - You know, in fact, there's even a wonderful special about that and the mentality that it's actually protect your mentality, not a bully mentality that goes behind that. And they don't talk about those those people, but they're the ads. They you know, the the Oilers would not have won all these, you know, all these championships and, you know, and vice versa. You know, it's and there's been other people like Sidney Crosby on the Penguins. So he's he's wonderfully talented, but he's not very well protected. So now he's had a lot of injuries. But even so, if they didn't have the defensive people taking care of him and filling in these other holes that are not his skill set, they would not have won multiple Stanley Cups. You know, that's just how it works. You know, Tom Brady, if you like American football, you know, same kind of thing. It's you know, he he wouldn't be him without the supporting characters. And so you need those ads. Not everybody needs to be your big star.

Catherine McCord (00:48:57) - Not everybody needs to be the big, flashy, shiny thing. Right? Sometimes you need the really awesome supporting character because they're that piece that's going to make it all come together. And now you're going to win the championships. Yeah. Yes. Yes. Keep your grounded. God, I need that because I get. I get going so fast. And, you know, it's always good to have that reminder of. Nope. Come back here and work on this little thing. Nope. Come back here to work on this thing. Come back, lady. Come back over here. Yeah. And and I will tell you a I used to for years I would have what I called my nice buddies. That reminded me to stop and be nice because I will get going and just. And it's not that I'm rude. I'm never rude. I have two Southern. I'm too much of a southern belle for that to be rude. But I will forget to actually be kind and warm. That's. And warm isn't really a natural state of being for me when as it comes to most humans, with my partner, with my little sister, that's about as and with all my foster animals, that's where the warmth goes.

Catherine McCord (00:50:12) - Um, but that's not really my natural state. So I used to have the people that would remind me to stop. Let out the warm and fuzzies. Be, you know, and now don't really need that. Now I've kind of got the rhythm, you know, and I know how to do it for myself. But for many years, uh, I would say about the first decade or more of my working life, I had to have. My fuzzy buddy, my warm and fuzzy buddy. My nice buddy. Yeah. Yeah. Right? Yeah. Yes. Stop having needs, you know. So. Yeah, can, can. You know, and I'll get in it and I'll jump in and I'll help people. And all of that part comes naturally, but the warm and fuzzies do not. So I was like, I needed that person. That would be like. You know, like, don't don't forget to go go in there and rah rah and say the nice thing and do the thing.

Catherine McCord (00:51:18) - I had an assistant for a while and thought that he did this all on his own. By the way. I thought this was so genius. He would first of all, he organized my desk for me and had my, like, tea or coffee. And somehow he always knew what mood was in before got there was just brilliant. And he would yeah. And he would like set out exactly what was like wanting on my desk time got there. But also the most extraordinary part to me was what he called my compliment list. And he would go through and he would say, These are the humans that have done something extraordinary. He was my assistant manager too, so he was both like my assistant and the assistant. Yeah. And he was a these are the humans who I think, you know, really need a compliment right now or deserve one or this is going on. And then there

would be suggestions as to some other things that we could do any kind of just we. So because that was just on my desk first thing, the first thing I did every day was go out and do the warm and fuzzies, right? And so thought, you know, every leader should be doing that.

Catherine McCord (00:52:19) - And so I kind of started carrying that over. Um, he was excitingly promoted out of my department. This is a, my last two job promoted out of my department into a leadership role elsewhere. Making way more money was super stoked about it. Um, and I kind of just carried that with me. You know, elsewhere of start the day with the warm and fuzzies and the encouraging, you know, and all that. But again. And celebrating your people. Yeah I mean I'm good at like, oh you hit your numbers. But what about the other stuff? What about the person who's always helping the other team members, the person who, you know, was really struggling, but now they're doing so great, you know, and just remembering to very publicly say you are rocking and I really appreciate you. And and I had my own way of doing that, but thought I liked his way better because it kind of brought a little bit more emotion to it. And so I liked it.

Catherine McCord (00:53:16) - Yeah. So so have your fuzzy buddy, you know, just have somebody that reminds you. Or if you're all fuzzy, go the other way with it. Get the person that yeah, you have your person going, No, you're getting off task. Get back over here. Come on. And I've been that for other people. I've been the new. No, don't derail. Get back over here. Yeah, come back over here. Come on. Yeah. No. No. Yes, we're symbiotic beings. We need other. There is no hate. I hate the phrase self-made man or woman. Whatever the case is, I hate it because there's no such thing. It's complete bullshit. There is no such thing. Everybody had help from somebody, had encouragement. In fact, I just watched a brilliant I recommend this to literally anyone, a brilliant documentary on Arnold Schwarzenegger. Right. And yeah, the freaking Terminator, you know. Yeah. Yeah, it is. Yeah. It's got, like three episodes, right? It's like three hours long.

Catherine McCord (00:54:29) - I'll start to finish. First of all, brilliant mentality. Like you can just learn so much from his mentality, but he talks about you that people would call him self-made and he's like, No, I'm not. I had this person to help me. This person just gives in and he really breaks it down in a very intelligent way. But it's very true. So even these big, you know, millionaire type people, you know, Mark Cuban's another one here in the States that's talked about that a lot. You know, there's all these people along the way that help you and that teach you and get you. And so there's there's no such thing. We need other people. That's just even the most introverted person needs other people to at least some extent. Oh, yeah. Yeah. Yes. Oh, absolutely. My favorite. And this is. Right? Oh, God. Yeah. I'm all for having fun at work. Am Um, just from start to finish. First of all, when you're, when you're neurodiverse, you actually need play more than even other people because it gets your brain functioning, right? You know, so doing grounding exercises, stemming these types of things to just get that energy out, right? So have all my toys behind me.

Catherine McCord (00:55:50) - I have, you know, I have different types of fidgets. I have different stuffed animals that I use for exercises. I have a beaded rhino that's great for different stuff, you know, So I have them for like the practical, you know, get my mind through it, get my

my energy refocused. But also people forget that how much, you know fun and play bonds people I have seen people stick with what is essentially the worst job ever just because they have a lot of fun with the other humans. And so even though. Yes. Yes. Because you have fun. You have fun. Yeah. The customers suck. The work itself sucks. But you stay because there's a lot of fun behind the scenes. Right. Um, and it's very true. It's so you need to have fun and know it's not the only thing. And yes, you still need to actually be taking care of your people and actually, you know, do all the serious stuff too, but stopping and playing.

Catherine McCord (00:56:52) - So I used to to do, you know, weekly games and it was also good, you know, bonding experience, like weekly games and get people and it would be some ridiculous like this week and this week is going to be movie trivia. We're going to see what you what you folks know about movies. And then it would be you know, one time we played hopscotch that actually got picked by my staff. They wanted to play hopscotch in the office. So we did that. We did a scavenger hunt. Um, and sometimes I would just stop everything, just walk through room and say, Everybody stop. Get off the phone. If you're on the phone, we wait for you to be done with whatever they were doing. I'd say. It's break time. I'd bring up some snacks. I'd bring out some some different drink. And that would have been fun. I never thought about that one. That would have been really fun. But we would just come out and we would just hang out.

Catherine McCord (00:57:41) - We turn up some music, There might be a little bit of dancing. There might, you know, some jokes, um, you know, that kind of thing. And we would just stop in the middle of the day, you know, maybe I could tell they were overly stressed. I could tell it was just a little too tense and we would stop and just be humans. You know. No. Okay. Yeah. No, no, no, no. Just whenever it's needed, that's when you do that. It's whenever it is needed. You stop and you just have fun sometimes. Also, this isn't really about play, but stop and. And let people process. I used to also have a role of you can come in my office, shut the door in for ten minutes, say anything that you want to say without any reprisals, without. And you can even tell me no feedback that you just needed to get it out. And then you take a deep breath and out you go and go back.

Catherine McCord (00:58:42) - And it's the same thing. It's a vent, right? It's a it's a vent. It gets it out. Now I said it. Yeah. Exactly. Got it out. Some people would stomp around the room while they did it, you know? Um, you know, we we explored. I had one client, I had them get a yep, I had one client. I had them put a punching bag in the office because it was a very frustrating industry. And so the people could go in there, take five minutes, put on those gloves and just wail in the punching bag and then come back out. And it was done. Um, and they're good and they're good and find fun ways to do things that don't always have to be so serious. Like whenever we would, you know, bring a new trainee at my last W2 job and was building out a national recruiting team, um, every time we got a new trainee there initiation, like once they were done with training was that they would come into a room, we would all come in and we would do they would have to conduct three interviews.

Catherine McCord (00:59:43) - One was serious and then the other two were goofy things that we had all had happen to us at some point in our careers. And so we would get to act and they would have to try to respond seriously and, you know, like actually handle the situation, you know? And it was so fun and it was goofy, but it also taught them skills. And it also made the point that this person is ready and it was a fun, goofy way to welcome them in, you know, to the group. And so it was it was a lot of fun and people really steered into that. Yeah. Oh, yeah, we did. We we. Some of our favorite ones were woman who brings kid to to interview. Um. Man who brings mom to interview. That happened. Yeah. Into it. Like. Like into the interview. Grown man brings his mommy. Not kidding. Um, we had somebody with, uh. What was the other one? Oh, yeah, we.

Catherine McCord (01:00:48) - We had somebody who thought it was fun to start disrobing in the middle of the interview. Um, so we. Yeah, so, of course, we had the person playing this put on extra layers so they weren't actually being indecent like the actual person was. Um, the actual person got down to their underwear. Um, so, um, yeah, so it was just. Yeah, it is. So, so we would have fun with it. We would have so much fun with it. And sometimes we throw in some serious ones too, of like one time we had someone who had a PTSD response in the middle of an interview. And so, so occasionally we would do a little bit more serious ones too. But it was a lot of fun, man. We had we had such a good time and it was just it was bonding. It was also a great sense of welcome because when they were done, everybody clapped. Everybody came up and like shook their hand and welcome them. And that's when they got to pick their own office supplies.

Catherine McCord (01:01:40) - We had a thing like when you get your desk, you pick your color, the styles, all that they got to go through and pick their stuff and everybody did it with them and it was very much a community feel. So yeah, play is everything and, and encourage people to have toys at their desks, to have, you know, listen to music, whatever it is they need to do. Just have fun. Your work should be healing like your work should be part. It should not be something that's toxic in your life. It should be something that's healing ultimately. Yeah. That's very sad. Yeah. Yes, it is. Whole other. Whole other show. Yeah. I'm all for him. Yeah. Yes. Um. You know. Okay, this is gonna sound funny, but this is honestly how I've always, always worked with. With human beings, animals. It's all the same. So, you know, I've been a foster mommy to all kinds of different critters, including exotics I've helped raise, like lions and tigers and that kind of thing.

Catherine McCord (01:02:56) - Yeah. And it's like, wait, hold on. New topic, new time. Oh, no. It was through a sanctuary, you know, And you help out and even work with adolescents and adult animals at the sanctuary. Not in my house, just to be very clear. Um, and so and ultimately, getting something to behave the way you want is as simple as giving out the right energy and just going, nope, in that one instance, but then immediately regrouping. So for instance, if you correct a wolf, I've done a lot of work with wolves and I have had them in my house, by the way. Um, yeah, just pack of Wolves isn't. And so, um, so what you do is you correct them and sometimes it's very and with wolves, it has to be a little bit harsh. That's just how they're designed. So you correct them immediately, let them know. Nope, that was the wall. But then it's but then they want reassurance. And so you, you know, you hug them and you pat them.

Catherine McCord (01:03:58) - You let them rub on you and reset Mark. Let them know it's okay. You're still here. Well, obviously don't rub on your employees. Yes, yes. Yeah. You're still in the tribe. You're still. You're still here. So don't rub on your employees physically want to be very clear. Do not. Do not do that. You do not do that. But the same basic thing needs to happen. It needs you need to let them know up front what the rules are, which I always did. I walked every animal ever walk, work, you know, worked with through the rules. You know, this is not yours. This is your. And had a system for doing that, you know. And so but then once if they break it, there is a nope, that was the line. But you know what? You know, that's okay. You know, here's what we're going to do to help you make sure this doesn't happen again. It's all right, you know, bubble and then start talking to them about the things that you want from them and the things that you know and different things going on so that they understand you're still part of this.

Catherine McCord (01:04:56) - You're not pushed away. You're not over here now. Yes. Yes, exactly. Yep. That wasn't the thing. No, thank you to that. Um, here's how we're going to fix it. And then also we're going to talk about how you're still part of the team and just include it. And don't just say, Oh, you're still part of the team. Actually involve them in some discussion about what's going on. I would sometimes even ask people's opinions during a meeting in which I had just had to say, No thank you to this behavior over here. Ask them their opinions. Talk to them about some projects. Ask if they need help with anything, you know, that kind of thing, and then keep going. Also, understanding the why something happened, you know, Was it a miscommunication? Did you not know? Is it just a bad day? What happened. So those types of things. But keeping that sense of community is how you do it. But nope, no, thank you.

Catherine McCord (01:05:49) - And just that real quick correction of that, wasn't it? That was not the thing. Yes. Yes. Yeah. Yep. Yep. Yep. And let me. 100%. Next thing you know, you have leprosy. Like, it's ridiculous, you know? Um. No, no, thank you. Yeah. Nope. Yeah, nope, nope. And I. And I do a thing. Yeah. And I still love you. I did a thing with a lot of my team members where I would just go by if I saw it, like, in the moment, right? I would just go by and I'd go, No, thank you. And they would look at me because they knew what I was talking about and they. Okay. And just smile at them. And then we, you know, maybe I'd say something else to them and then just keep going. And it just made the point of, no, not a big deal, you know, and would say quietly, so only to them, you know.

Catherine McCord (01:06:55) - Yeah. And, and. Although I'm not against public shaming if it's appropriate, I have very, very publicly fired people and shamed them. Um, so for instance, I was, I was in a situation in which one of my employees was having a particularly bad day, and I called another one of my employees. They were both black. That's, I guess, somewhat relevant to the story, called her a crotchety old N-word. But everybody. And I went, Oh, no, sir. In front of everyone. Walked over and said, What in the world is going on with you and why did you think that was appropriate? Shrinks back. I said, That is not acceptable. Said, I need both of you to come to my office now. When we got into the office, we worked through it. We talked through the whole thing. He did get a ride up because that's a great big no, no. Actually, it was a final. But he he overcame it, you know, moved on.

Catherine McCord (01:08:02) - Um. But. And because and the only reason it wasn't a termination was because she had said something to him that was also not okay that I had not heard. So they both, you know, both got in trouble and all this sort of thing. But anyway, so but in that case, it was appropriate because the whole team had seen it. It had been done very big. So it needed to be called out in front of it so that everyone saw the boundary. Yeah. Yes. Oh, yeah. No, no, no. Yeah, right there in front of everybody. Yes. And the same thing if somebody treats you wrong at work. So I was once going into this is the only time something like this ever happened and don't know what possessed this person to do this. So I was walking into a meeting and the owner of the company. Looks at me and says, That dress looks really good on your tits. And I turned around me without missing a beat, turned around and said is something that somebody with a small dick would say and want to say.

Catherine McCord (01:09:18) - That was not the most professional way to handle that. Okay, I'm not hating for saying those exact words. Okay. Yes. Yeah. Maybe. Maybe tweak that. Um, but it also made the points. And it was. And he kind of looked at me and said, and that took him back like it kind of shook him back and said, that is not how you address a woman like me or any woman, for that matter, said, No thank you to that. Again, go back to the no thank you. No, thank you. And he goes and, you know, he kind of smiled and nodded and goes and goes. Point taken. And then. And that was the end of it. And honestly, that relationship went on from there. It was it was not soured. That was an unusual circumstance. But the point is, set those boundaries hard, like, nope, this is the line. This, this is it. Don't cross it. It's you can be over here.

Catherine McCord (01:10:17) - You can be Don't don't cross that line. Oh, yes, it is. Because here's the thing. Because you're going to sour in a relationship with someone if you don't give them clear boundaries. This applies for your children, your spouse, whatever it is. These are my personal boundaries or professional, whatever the case is. And by communicating those and keeping them firm, you're actually keeping the relationship stronger. This also means that you need to do the same of the same for them. You need to be respectful, their boundaries and work with them as well. So it's not just about you.

Else Kramer (01:10:59) - Hmm. Yep. Oh.

Catherine McCord (01:11:04) - So yes. Oh, yes. So many. Um, number. Number one. Um, help people to understand what it is that you need. So I see a lot of people that will just say, I need this. Okay. All right. Don't understand why or what the. You know, don't understand what exactly you need. I need a little bit more elaboration.

Catherine McCord (01:11:27) - So some people say I need this to look like this, elaborate. Um, and this is the why and it doesn't need to be because I'm ADHD or dyslexic or you don't need to say that, but it will help me to. That's the wording I like to use. It will help me to. Yes, You know, my brain works in a way that if it's presented this way, I'm much more effective. So can you please present it this way? That is way better than just saying, hey, need it this way or

complaining or something like that. Um, another thing. Yeah, it is kind of selling. It's like, Hey, you know, this is what I need and you just have to help them understand it. You have to coach the person through it because this is a new experience for them. It may be normal for you, but it's new for them. So just kind of coax them through it. If you have somebody that digs in their heels, right, because it is going to happen, you'll occasionally get the jerk that's just going to dig in their heels.

Catherine McCord (01:12:24) - You just say the next time they do the undesired behavior, say no thank you again here, or just say no thank you. Here is my you know, as previously discussed, here is my preferred process or or the way want to be communicated with whatever it is, send it to them in writing and say as soon as we get it this way, I'm happy to to do this for you. In other words, make them go back and do it the way that is, that you need to set the pattern. And it's. Yeah. Yeah. Like this is. This is just. Yeah, this is the thing that I needed. Thank you so much. Or even if it's just, you know, um, a method of communication. For instance, you know, the person calls you. Let's say the person calls, you say, I'm so. And you need things in writing. Say thank you so very much for your phone call. Just remember, I do need things in writing.

Catherine McCord (01:13:18) - Please send it over to me as soon as that happens. I'm happy to get it done for you because it shows I am going to help you, you know? But it's putting up that boundary of but it needs to be done this way. Yeah. Oh, yeah. That's different. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Don't want spontaneous calls. Yeah. Don't want that. Yeah. Yeah, yeah. Whatever it is. Yeah. Just. Just let them know and just. And it is important to let them know that you are still going to be helping them, you know, that type of thing that's very important both for purposes and your own and the relationship and just the effective communication. But put that boundary and make them go back and do it. Because if you just say next time, it's always going to be next time, you need to have them go back. Um. That takes a lot of practice because it's like, Dude, I already told you this. Like, get it together.

Catherine McCord (01:14:40) - But also remember, you know, there's always a time in your life where someone had to tell you something more than once. And so just stop and be like and check yourself a little bit. You know, I have a thing I hate hypocrisy. So I. I do so much in my life to avoid ever being a hypocrite, you know, And it's still going to randomly, occasionally happen. But for the most part, it it's not going to happen, you know? And so, um, or I'll call myself out on it as it's happening. Be like, okay, realize this, you know, but it still needs to be said. Yeah. Um, but, but realize about yourself. You've been in their shoes too. Now, if it just keeps happening, then they're. They're either really struggling or they're being a jerk. Um, give some grace. Assume it's the really struggling. Unless they let you know for sure which direction it is, but then you elicit the help of someone else because obviously the way that you're teaching it to them is not working.

Catherine McCord (01:15:32) - So elicit, you know, or ask them say, okay, how say I am failing and I am not communicating this to you in an effective way? What is the best way that I can communicate with you? Help me. Help you? Yeah, but then if that doesn't work, get leadership

involved, because sometimes it's just a jerk. Yeah. Yeah. And then just do something else. Oh, by always giving them different. I constantly churn up tasks clients they're working with that just churn it. The second can feel their energy shift and could feel it getting too stagnant. I teach them new skills that really helps. Um, that type of thing. So, so just depending on where they're at, what the individual need is. But you have to pay attention to your team's energy.

Else Kramer (01:16:30) - Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Catherine McCord (01:16:38) - Yeah. Yeah. And not many, let me tell you. I also. Yes. Like I'm giving like the DA. Like what is wrong with you face? Like.

Catherine McCord (01:16:54) - Like that is the face that's happening. It's so true though. Like. And why? Why do people not know this? Like, that's so obvious to me. And it is hard for me because I have a few very unusual skills, um, that very few other people share. It can be very frustrating because I'm like, Why can't you do this? And then I'm like, Oh, right. Because that's just me. Like, that's that's my little unique. Yeah. Yeah. Just. Just doing more weird stuff than you. That's not your fault. Okay. Um, but there are, um. But people can teach themselves to do a lot, you know, just like I've taught myself to remember to be nice, you know, become my own nice buddy, my own fuzzy buddy. I, you know, you have to learn to control different things. And I will put this back on some of the neurodiverse folks out there. Some things are still on you to accommodate and are still on you to figure out.

Catherine McCord (01:17:52) - Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Can we be productively angry? Like, that's my whole thing. Let's just be productively angry. Let's actually, first of all, don't complain unless you're going to hop in there and help. Don't want to hear it out of you. If somebody don't care what it is, or even if I completely agree with what you're saying, I don't want to hear it unless you're out there actually doing something and doing more than just posting postings. All well and good for you. Raise awareness, blah, blah, blah. But what are you actually doing to fix it? Yeah. What are you changing? Um, if you're not, just shush. That's all I have to say to you. Um, but but seriously though. So. But you see all this frankly, nonsense and. And I can see why they're saying it. Um, but this, this idea that the marginalized group, whomever it is, does not need to participate in the solution. And the healing is lunacy.

Catherine McCord (01:19:15) - First of all, how do you expect them to get it right if you're not telling them what it is that you need? And participating in building the solution? That doesn't even make any sense. Now, it is unfair. Okay? It is unfair that you have to. That stinks. But yeah, life isn't fair. Nobody ever told you. It's just not how it works. So but to be practical, we need to be participating in the solution. So some. And sometimes we gotta figure out how to solve it ourselves. So for instance. Um, with my MCAs. Like, just touching different things can make me get hives or go into anaphylaxis. Can't expect. Everybody can't I can't tell everybody. Like only wear this material, only use this soap. That is insane. I can't do that. So I have to just accommodate myself and pay attention to different things. And so that's, you know, that's, that's on me to do, um, same kind of thing with my bipolar.

Catherine McCord (01:20:14) - Ultimately, it's up to me to manage my symptoms. Just how it goes. It is not the responsibility of someone else to control my mania or to accommodate my mania. That is me. It is not up to somebody else to accommodate my depression. That is me. And if I ran, if that's going to affect my work, then I need to tell them what is specifically is that I need. Um, how we can still get the work done. All of that. That again. Now they can also choose to be helpful and maybe they have some knowledge where they can also be helpful. That's great if that's the case. But ultimately, the burden is not on them for that. And so we need to also remember that we need to self-advocate. And I know that that's not what people have been taught. And so that's that can feel very unnatural for people. So want to give a lot of grace there because a lot of people have been specifically taught not to do that. And so it's going to feel so uncomfortable the first like period, like a year or so that you do this.

Catherine McCord (01:21:19) - Yes. Oh, my God. Yes. Oh, 100%. Yes, yes, yes. Assuming you have disclosed and even if you haven't, you can still advocate without disclosing. So you can still say, I need this in order to blink. Right? You can still say that you do not want to be very clear. So thank you for for bringing that up. You do not need to disclose in order to self-advocate. Those two things are not interchanged. So you can always stand up for yourself. Don't disclose to everybody. I'm in more of a habit about it now because I talk about everything that goes on with me so very openly. Um, but I even still having a lot of people don't know this. I still have one neurodiversity that I never bring up, ever. It does not come out of my mouth. Um, and that is for safety reasons. I back that decision. I'm not moving from that decision at this time. Maybe at some point in the future I will.

Catherine McCord (01:22:07) - Um, but that is my choice. But. But I still. Self-advocate all the time. People just don't know why I'm asking for certain things. It's just this is what I need in order to do this, you know? And yeah. And fill in the blank. And so I, I understand how to do that because I've had a lot of people go, but you just tell everybody everything. It's easy for you. I'm like, no. And also don't like to, to I'm not the light again. I'm not the warm and fuzzy, I'm not the oh, here know everything about me kind of person that took a lot of practice and I only learned to do it because I saw that it would actually help in my work and help other humans. That took a lot of practice. It is not easy. It is not natural. It is very tough actually, for me. Even still today can be very draining. Um, but yeah. So self-advocate even if you don't disclose. Yes, absolutely.

Catherine McCord (01:23:12) - Yeah. Yeah, absolutely. Absolutely. Just as. Yes. Oh. Mhm. Nope. Nope. Got you. Actually, no. I'm trying to narrow it down because I feel that way about several people that feel should be getting way more attention than what they do. Um, I'm going to give I'm going to give a shout out to, to two people, um, that have made astronomical impacts on me, not just as a professional, but as a human. And those two are Seth Butler, who gave me the word curiosity to cling to so very much. He comes from an educational background and now does spoken word on anti-racism and inclusion. Um, so Seth Butler is extraordinary. He will touch you if you if you pay attention to what he does. He will impact you. And then the other is Celia Daniels, who does beautiful inclusion work around the Lgbtq community and. Give so much kindness and grace against all. I mean, all odds. Honestly, I don't know how any human

being can give this much love and kindness to people that are being so ugly and hateful, but has such a beautiful approach to helping others understand.

Catherine McCord (01:25:01) - And that is a human that everyone should know about and everyone should be following and everyone should learn from. Because even if that's not your cause, that's not your case. The humanity there and the lessons in how to better speak to people and how to better communicate and how kindness can work is extraordinary. Thank you. Thank you for having me.