

How's Work? with Esther Perel

Season 1: Ep 4 - Laid Off and Starting Over

Montage:

[00:00:00]

-I just I feel continually undermined.

- The job has always been that place where I've been needed and I feel important

- A lot of the people that work for me are like an extension of my family.

Esther: There's no doubt that your emotional and relational dowry comes with you to work.

- Imagine going to work every day and really busy place and no one will make eye contact with you.

-I mean, it feels like a breakup

Esther: it doesn't feel, it is.

So how's work?

END OF MONTAGE

VO: What you're about to hear is an unscripted one time counseling session focused on work.

For the purposes of maintaining confidentiality, names, employers and other identifiable characteristics have been removed but their voices and their stories are real.

Speaker 2: I thought it would be helpful for the two of us as we start into a new side [00:01:00] of our relationship to kind of work through a very traumatic year -professionally and personally that we both lived through.

Esther: How we leave a job is key to how we establish the next one. With this creative pair I would like to help them make a clean closure so that they can have a proper beginning.

Speaker 1: I want the experience we've been through to inform what we do, but I don't want what we're doing to be, what's the word I'm looking for? I want this to be something we do because this is the next step for us regardless of what happened. I don't want to be running my life based off negative things that happen to me. Does that make sense?

Esther: So I'll tell you what I, what I'm I'm hearing, you had a traumatic ending [00:02:00] that needs to be processed. And you want it to become one experience in

a long history, rather than the informative experience that now shapes everything you do?

Speaker 1: Outside of the last, the way that came around, it really was a good experience.

I learned a ton that I make reference to every single day. So when I'm having a good day, I'm grateful that we went through that experience, but there's an overshadowing to it of the staff who were laid off, the staff here and still there and miserable, the creators who are working on projects that didn't work out very well, I mean some people put a lot of time and effort into projects that just got canned and it was basically it's all because of me, is what it comes down to.

Esther: And what's your relationship to that?

Speaker 2: I feel also responsible for the people who came to work for us. I feel pretty [00:03:00] good that most of them have landed somewhere that makes them happy. now. It felt like we were behead essentially like we were publicly shamed throughout the entire organization and then we just had to sit there while all the people that we loved were moved somewhere else and given new tasks and basically asked not to speak to us essentially, you know, it's like imagine going to work every day in really busy place and no one will make eye contact with you. I mean, it's a super shitty place to be, makes you angry, it makes you bitter makes you I don't know. I was at a party last weekend and someone asks me about the guy who laid us off for another project, asked me about what I thought about him, and I found myself, like he's a dickhead and then I spent probably 10 minutes going off about how much I despise this man. [00:04:00] That was way too much information to give at a holiday party, but like that still sits inside me. I want the world to know what an asshole this person is.

Esther: I see this man that goes to the cheese plate and hopes to get a little piece of Brie and instead he gets a menu of ten minutes of a rant about a person he doesn't know and doesn't care about by someone who is in the grip of the bitterness that we can hold in.

It just pursues us. It has a tenacity that is very painful. Let me just say that the words were not the most complimentary.

Do you need together to have a certain code or handle on how you want to deal with this? Because I hear you, you said we were able to do great things, you were able to learn a lot. You know, there is the, the what was it three years? And then there is the ending and and [00:05:00] at this point you're still close to the ending. It is a part of your origin story, but it shouldn't be a dominant theme of your origin story.

You know what I mean by the origin story? Kind of how these two people came together cannot be just framed around, they were both sacked in this terrible way together. It's a piece but it may not have to be the central theme of the origin story.

Speaker 1: Oh, I certainly hope it is not

Esther: but that depends on the two of you.

Speaker 1: There are times when I can feel certain subjects really kind of igniting me and she's probably one of the few people in my life where I will just if I need to go there, I will just go there. I'll just say save the shitty thing that's on my mind and I got to the point of...

Esther: Do you ignite each other or do you contain [00:06:00] each other at this moment? I would imagine a bit too much igniting and you could use more containing.

Speaker 1: Would that be fair now?

Do you think that we just kind of get it off our chests and move on? I mean that's what it feels to me, does it feel that way to you?

Speaker 2: Yeah, I don't think I'd, I don't think we dwell in it,

Speaker 1: right.

Esther: Okay, but here's the thing. You probably will be wise if it's a small industry, to not speak about any of this publicly. There's no point. Especially if you have each other you can just wink at each other, and do your cross-referencing and maintain a complete, uh, you can just you know, yesterday someone named mentioned the name and they say oh, that's the person [00:07:00] and they say, you know him and I say yes, and then I just looked. They can you know, I didn't say oh fantastic.

Yeah. I just did nothing and silence speaks. Do the high road.

Speaker 1: I hear you and I believe you and the thing that I feel like fight against is every once in a while it feels, I just feel myself gravitating towards the low road.

Esther: I know, and I know it feels good to vent and to get it out. You know, there is a fantastic line that is called resentment is like swallowing poison and waiting for the other person to die.

You understand? As I'm listening to you, I'm thinking what would a small ritual potentially bring to you? ritual. I mean, I like burning rituals or throwing away rituals, or water rituals, you know, where you let something go. Somebody [00:08:00] understood the power of rituals a long time ago for stuff that is kind of poisoning you and in this case. It's something about doing a ritual together that kind of says, you know, it's a piece it we're not we're not going to let be central because the power of ritual is that it's totally symbolic. It has a meaning that is bigger than the thing itself.

Speaker 1: I'm game.

Esther: You light the candles, you light the candle, you know, you know that you don't bring back the dead but there is something about that candle and its,

symbolism, about the light about the perpetuity, about the memory, about you know, it's the same in the ritual.

I happen to think that stuff that sticks on us. There's something about more than talking about it or processing it, which you will have done by then, plenty, there's something about a ritual that can be really lightning. It's [00:09:00] also how do you become not just vigilant, you know when you feel that you've been mismanaged mishandled you there's often a tendency to become vigilant, you know, who else is out there? What else is there? We don't see is getting it does rupture a sense of kind of basic trust, in which often people have worked with till now, a traumatic experience has the capacity of leaving people with the threat detector. So now you're looking for the resonance of that thing and then it becomes a truth.

So you want to kind of be aware without it ruining you and running you both, yeah?

Speaker 2: we always have a plan a and plan B and a plan C around everything like it's like, you constantly professionally, you have to prepare for the worst to happen. Just so that you know, well if x happens, I'll be ready with this.

Esther: Yes, but that's about situations. I need alternatives in [00:10:00] case this doesn't work out. What is, do I do, you know. That's not the same as I got robbed. And now when I'm in front of people and they say I like your shoes, I'm wondering is that they're going to get him from me?

Speaker 1: Yeah.

Esther: It's a different thing.

You know one is just basically complex thinking the other is actually reductionistic thinking. It's threat detector thinking. Is this the same, what am I sniffing here?

Speaker 1: How do we make ourselves so we can make each other aware of when that's happening?

Esther: I like his question because he is not mired in the past and trobbing vengeful fantasies. On occasion he may have one. What he's really asking is how do we make space for trust to be built [00:11:00] and that tells me a lot about the potential of this creative pair.

Well, what will happen is that one of you will say are we doing this thing? And the other one will say no no, we're just being professional just you know, we're just doing our plans and and then probably there will be a bit of each and the more you are not the same the better it is.

Just so you understand the more you do not feed off each other but actually differentiate in your responses around the particular situation the better it will be.

Speaker 2: Right

Esther: Do you understand? This to me is also the strength of a pair.

It's very important not to get seduced in joining the choir of the disenchanting, that lament together, gossip together, feed off the [00:12:00] bitterness, but to have one person sink and then have the other one say, uh uh uh, we don't go there. If they can play off each other in that way, they will protect the health of the new relationship and the next venture.

When you think this relationship, my ideal version of it would be what?

Speaker 1: Are you asking both of us because I'd like her to go first, just because...

Speaker 2: It's not about me yet.

This is about you.

Speaker 1: Okay. All right. My vision is to have a busy dynamic range of things that were working on. Not too many. And my vision is we will favor deeper rather than more. Both of the quality of work we do, the type of people we work with. I would be happy doing eight, ten projects a year [00:13:00] and not trying to do, never trying to do 25 projects a year or 30 projects or whatever crazy number we were working on.

To me at this stage in my life that would be fun and. That we have a group of people that we surround ourselves with who are both intellectually really interesting people to be around. Dynamic. Not everybody thinking or acting or being the same and that it's a fun place to come spend a day.

Esther: What's the vision and what's the trepidation for the two of you?

Speaker 2: I want to continue making things. We sort of talked a little bit about this actually even before we came in here, not in relation to what we would say to you, but in sort of coming up with words that would describe the company that we were making. It was kind of a branding exercise, and he asked me what I wanted to do [00:14:00] ultimately and I said I want to continue to make things that change people's lives. And the trepidation I have is, I just, we have had this very, I don't know, I have liked you since the moment you called me on the phone eight years ago. Never met you before, totally thought you were interesting and we have slowly I think become friends and you feel like family to me now and sometimes I don't want to risk that. That's very important to me. If suddenly you were not part of my life that would that would be very upsetting to me. So I don't want to fuck that up. I hope you don't fuck that up either.

Speaker 1: It'll be my fault if we do right?

Speaker 2: I just don't want to do anything that would jeopardize the friendship and you know, you feel like a big brother to me.

Speaker 1: I feel the same way [00:15:00] about you. You may remember that when we realized last February or March when things were kind of approaching a point of

being in irreconcilable that you said to me you shouldn't be upset because you can do lots of things. I said I'm sad because I don't get to do them with you

Speaker 2: And I feel I feel exactly the same way.

I got offered another job in March and when I had a conversation about it, I could have gone that way but I wasn't ready to leave you and what we were doing together. I just don't want to fuck up this thing that we have

Esther: What I hear is, if I went for the security, I would go alone to find another job. I am not doing this to be with you and that puts me in a more vulnerable place in relation to you because for you, for my love and our collaboration, I am putting myself in a way in a more precarious situation [00:16:00] and that's why you're being told and don't fuck it up. Because I can control my part of what I'm doing in making this choice, but I kind of depend on you.

I didn't go there in order to be with you and I want you, that's my addition to your sentence, and I want you to really understand that this is not a small thing. Do you?

Speaker 1: I do. I do. And I don't think it would be complete to not acknowledge the opposite as well.

Speaker 2: Meaning?

Esther: I just, did I understand that correctly?

Speaker 2: You did?

Speaker 1: There's often temptation throughout this whole process to think is this really the course or should I just go for the easy thing, right? I [00:17:00] remember a couple point, me telling you like look I'm going to start turning down things because I'm in this. All right? And I told you you could leave at any point because if I didn't in our conversations about doing this, because if I didn't I would never trust that you were there because out of something other than loyalty to our friendship and I wanted you to, I still want you to feel like if this isn't what you want to do at any point you can say that and know that that's going to be okay.

Esther: But I want I'm going to suggest to you that you actually take it through the reverse instead of saying you should know that if you want to go at any point you can go. It may be more effective if you actually say some version of how deeply touched or honored you are that your relationship is so important that she'd be [00:18:00] willing. I don't think it's about easy, it's more about sure versus uncertain. And for us and for what this means to me, I'm letting go of something else that is really very important as well.

And when you are invested with such importance, probably the place to start is with the acknowledgement of that investment.

Speaker 1: And I'm embarrassed that I didn't think to say that. That means a tremendous lot to me. You putting your faith in your trust in me and making those

choices is very meaningful to me. I think you know that I feel very similar to you when you expressed towards me and for you to be willing to take a risk like that makes me feel very good emotionally. It also makes me more [00:19:00] excited to work with you.

Not that I needed that right? I'm pretty much there to start with right, or have been the whole time. But that is yeah the that means a lot.

Speaker 2: And sometimes I feel like a jerk because I'm like, I like very, it takes me a long time to figure out that I trust but especially in the work and especially if I'm going to give myself to something in such a big way, I have to feel totally that I can trust the person that I'm working with. I don't like a lot of people and then there are this corp group of people that I like and I know that I'm going to like them almost immediately. Like there's something about them that I feel, you know drawn to.

Speaker 1: You say you don't like a lot of people, are you aware of how many people like you and how much they think of you?

Speaker 2: Am I aware that people like me?

Speaker 1: How much people like you and how many people who interact with you [00:20:00] like you.

It's not like a polite thing. I mean we've made jokes about this before about you know, I've got a big idea and people like working because I have a big idea, but they want to spend every day with her, you know, and it's a combination and I sometimes I don't think you recognize that about you.

It's incredibly powerful. You know, and not only does that make you a good producer, but it makes you an extraordinary person and I don't use that word lightly.

Esther: What strikes me in this moment is less about the fact that he says something nice about her and more about his observant quality. The fact that he still is able to comfortably say, you know people like you. He's noticing the ripples of relationships, those nuances, they matter and at a time when men have become more vigilant [00:21:00] and when simple statements can become so loaded, as if he saying you woman you're just a symbol of agreeableness, your likeability is important. I know that this goes way deeper and I'm pleased that he can still make the statement he just made.

Speaker 1: You know, there are times when I look at you and I look how much you've grown and I wonder what point you're going to eclipse me and I'm going to be following you. I'm not joking.

You know, I've got a couple of years on you, experience wise and whatever, but I you know, I have watched you grow so much, especially in the last three years when you were put in a position to have that room and expanse and you filled it and it would be foolish to think you are done with that transcendence at this point.

So if anything I'm looking forward to just kicking back and relaxing and riding your coattails for the [00:22:00] next couple years.

Speaker 2: Sure

Speaker 1: seriously.

Speaker 2: But you have given me those opportunities.

Speaker 1: All I did was clear the brush out.

Speaker 2: I know but from from a 27-year old almost 28 year-old you hired me for a three-month temp job and you saw something and me that I had spent five years at a network trying to get someone to pay attention to.

I feel grateful in so many ways because you have pushed me and to be you know better, to ask for things and I never wanted to be a vice president of fucking anything, but I'm so glad I got to do that. And I have these choices now. I can be a creative lead on something or I can run the business side of something too and [00:23:00] that's something that I don't think I would have been drawn to you, but I learned it, you know, while working with you.

Esther: No sooner did they begin to talk about the vision for the company and the brand that they actually went and did a very important piece of unfinished business. But of a particular kind. The kind that says I just have never had the chance to thank you for what you've done for me and seeing that is really important.

So many business partners will focus extensively on the brand on the business on the goals and not on the relationship. What these two people are doing is actually crucial for establishing the business partnership and the successful brand.

But you know, you're transitioning from a mentorship relationship [00:24:00] to a creative pair. Because you were not just the boss, what I'm hearing from you is you you mentioned me, you you saw in me, you developed it with me, you believed in me. You know and and as many mentors and teachers have said to their students and one day you'll be the teacher and I'll become your student. You know there is that switch, you know, the teacher who goes with the student and now they become collaborators and then one day the student becomes the teacher and and there is an age issue involved, there is an experience issue involved and then there is a gender issue involved, in some cases some and in some cases not. So there are three different levels, you know. When you enter a room everybody notices the gender composition of the pair, you know and [00:25:00] there is something very beautiful in saying you're the likable person, you're the affable person, you have great ideas, but you're also the one that seals the relationships. I come in with the big idea, uh, in some context that's actually really valued in some context it's you know, he comes with the great ideas and it comes with the with the young pretty girl. Who is...

Speaker 2: Gonna seal the deal.

Esther: You know, she's the nice one. You know, she, you know, she's the the arm candy, you know.

Speaker 1: In my defense, I hired her for that three month contract, I'd never even seen you before.

Esther: But I'm not even thinking that would be your view on her. I think that. I can see people's responses when you walk into room. You know, your effort is to establish yourself, you know, I'm not his arm candy, and I'm not just his underling and I'm not just you know, whatever the just is. And then for you [00:26:00] to also be free of having to play that traditional role of you know, I'm the deal guy the ideas guy, you know.

Speaker 1: Actually I don't like that kind of binary but it applies more than it doesn't.

Esther: It does and that doesn't, that is not who you are to each other but that is how other people will at times start by seeing you and then you're going to need three minutes if not one to educate them.

Speaker 1: Right. Well, it's like I also, that doesn't end there too. I think there are times where people try to, who have worked with us or know us, try to box us into things as far as a working relationship. And also something I said once and I've regretted, I told you about it, was once I kind of blurted to someone, well I start things and she finishes them, which actually does happen, but it's not the way that I want it, I want to describe it.

I also [00:27:00] hate, I don't know why I hate this, but I hate when people talk about us being like work spouses which people do periodically and I just shut it down. I don't like that frame at all because it has a hierarchical element to it that I've never liked. And plays into this whole thing about the guy and the girl of course there has to be that kind of framing for that relationship. And I refer to you as the little sister I never had.

Speaker 2: And I always wanted an older brother. I was the oldest and not to get into my family dynamics, but I didn't have a very positive male figure in my life for the beginning of my life and even at that it was an interesting, it was interesting, it was interesting role in which the man of my life was whatever.

Esther: But actually I would not say whatever. I would say that there's no doubt that your emotional and relational dowry comes with you to work. And each of you has a history around trust, around [00:28:00] men, women, gender, power relationship versus task, you know, I love to ask the question always, you know, where you raised for loyalty or where you race for autonomy. What would you say?

Speaker 1: I think my, it's interesting because I think that there actually is two answers. I think my family raised me for autonomy, maybe even more than they should have.

My parents came from very broken families and didn't really understand a functional relationship. They actually have a pretty good marriage and have had a pretty good marriage for the most part, but they raised me with an undertone of you need to not depend on anybody, right? Look at what happens when you depend on people.

So I'd say that when I when [00:29:00] I'm being true to my nature, I think the answer is loyalty. But my upbringing from my family was definitely autonomy. Do it yourself, don't depend on anybody.

Esther: And you would say?

Speaker 2: I don't think it was a conscious effort on my my mother's part to raise me to be anything but self-sufficient. My mom had no choice my mom worked. My parents divorced when I was really young, my mom moved all the way across the world and we lived in Hawaii. My mom had no family. No friends. Nothing.

She joined the army and you know, I've always done things myself my whole life. I my mom worked nights when I was in kindergarten and I got up, got myself ready for school and walk to school as a five-year-old. You know, that was just that was the way that my life was. That is always how my life has been [00:30:00]. We moved so much in my childhood. I went to three schools in just first grade alone. We moved all the time. It seems sometimes pointless to make friends. So the relationships that I have that I feed and maintain and maintain me I've made it work. I'm very loyal I think as a friend and a colleague.

Esther: When you are raised to the degree that you were for autonomy, you can imagine the stakes when you allow yourself to rely on others.

Speaker 2: They're high. Even if you look at the work that I do, I like to wear all the hats in my job. I like to do every single thing on a project I think because I have control issues over that project and that makes me feel good.

Esther: Right and many people who are raised for [00:31:00] autonomy have a harder time delegating. They rely on themselves.

If they have a problem, they try to solve it alone. They may have more trust issues as in simply I've never really learned what it's like to rely on other people and to think that they're going to come through and they going to be there they're going to show up and they're going to do it as well as I would that's the other piece of course, they're going to do it as well as I would.

Because otherwise, I may just do it myself. Right, you know, you're probably going to like a team of other people who are all self motivators, self-starters, you know people who do who do things on their own and beyond what is expected and they'll even know more what they need to do than you would know yourself, you know, because you're going to staff and so, you know that that dimension here is a very useful one in your staffing.

On the other hand people who are [00:32:00] raised for loyalty are more likely to tell you when they struggle with something. That's not going to be the one who's going to hide it for two months trying to figure it out alone. because they're too embarrassed to let you know that they don't know how to do something.

Speaker 2: You and I are very different, even in the way that we work.

Speaker 1: Yeah, right. I want to talk about structure and Clarity and purpose.

Speaker 2: And somewhere between the two of us we figured it out.

Esther: And how was it to start today without any clarity and structure and purpose?

Speaker 1: I don't think that's the case. I think that, like we said, as we mentioned we got together at a coffee shop before we came over here and did this little quick little branding exercise that my wife had suggested and I was not surprised at all how quickly we worked our way through that

Speaker 2: We had to come up with six words that describe not only the work but the company, like who we what we want to represent to the world.

Esther: And what did you say?

Speaker 2: What was the [00:33:00] first one, remember?

Speaker 1: Disciplined. Imaginative?

Speaker 2: I think it was curious

Speaker 1: Curious, imaginative was the runner-up.

Esther: It's a part in many parts, you know, what's a part of your identity that you would say was given to you?

What's a part of a legacy, a part of what you were told or what was emphasized for you to be or not to be and what's a part of your identity that you've chosen?

Speaker 1: I know one answer. I know what I've chosen. And that kind of community or kind of the the group of people that I'm surrounded that is purposeful.

Where I started to realize how much other people influence my my kind of satisfaction with the work I was doing, how much I needed them in order to do what I wanted to do and [00:34:00] kind of grew to love and respect them and be eager for interaction with them as a result of that. So that's why I've chosen that was a long choice to make.

Speaker 2: Yeah, I guess I've feel like for most of my life I had to overcome who I was and what I was given.

If that makes that sounds terrible, I mean I grew up in a house full of love where I had food on the table. I mean, this is first world problems, but I grew up in a home which

was very, um, very disconnected I think with the world. Not curious. Educated, but my mom was the first person in her family to go to college.

So her whole side of the family thought that [00:35:00] my mom was too good for them. And that was reflected upon me too. They thought she was mean and hard on me. She just wanted me to do better than she did and...

Esther: And you did.

Speaker 2: I did and so I would say that was that was given to me.

Speaker 1: I swear I picked this before you said what you were going to say, but it's so amazingly similar to what you said, you know, I am two generations off the factory floor.

My parents were like weird aliens in both of their families. They would go to college and have professional jobs and do all these things. And so I, you know, I always felt and with what I was given was that if I coast I'm just going to be like upward mobility was like that's what I was given was this idea of you can aspire to be more than what your natural lot is in life and your natural light is not that great.

[00:36:00] **Speaker 2:** But I don't see myself as ambitious, which I've said to my husband before and he laughs but like I would never describe myself as ambitious would you?

Speaker 1: I would but I think you're different than that. I think you're you're not afraid to have a vision. It's not just for your professional work, it's obviously for your personal life, too.

Speaker 2: My family thinks I'm strange. In fact, you know, no one came in my wedding...

Speaker 1: They think you're conceited and too good for them.

Speaker 2: Oh, Totally. Yeah, when I go home, not my mother, but my extended family they don't ask me anything. They don't ask me about my children. They don't ask me about my life.

They don't ask me anything. It's like I don't exist. And it's so strange to me because I am interesting and I am making fun things and I'm curious about their lives. But they are not curious about mine.

Speaker 1: Is that a social Grace thing or is that just they just think you're an [00:37:00] alien creature?

Speaker 2: Maybe it's both. Maybe they think they don't don't understand my choices. Literally no one came to my wedding for my family. My parents that was it.

Not even my grandfather like nobody showed up at my wedding.

Esther: And you consider that a first world problem?

You know many people wish they would have first world problems than the ones they're grappling with you know, but it does tell me why your first value for both of you is discipline.

Speaker 1: Discipline as in purposeful.

Esther: Yes, as in directed as in nobody's going to clean up for you as a nothing is too high for you or too low for you as in all of that is discipline.

You know knowing all levels is one nice way of telling it. The other one is to say, you know, the lower stuff is not the below you [00:38:00] kind of things that you know. But the fact that you put discipline, discipline is what moves people you know from one class to another, from one set of opportunities to another, you know, and interesting that what you think you've chosen is in fact, what was given to you.

What was given to you is your mother saying I want you to do. But she didn't just say professionally. She probably also meant it in personal choices and in options and in deliberateness and in you know, so even when you chose your husband and you think that that's part of how the parts that I chose the kind, the legacy of it is the legacy of your mother, do better than me, have more options than I have had.

There's a huge Legacy. And I think that your management style fits that [00:39:00] as well. So to me, all of this is a legacy line in the best sense of the word. You know, and I would not look at it as superficial because it actually drives you even when you ask the question personally or professionally, I do not differentiate these things because the way you're going to do the professional and the values that you've put in your branding are completely derivative from what you've experienced on the personal.

Of course you have innate curious and that curious is in opposition to the lack of curiosity that you have in your family. To the fact that the world doesn't exist for them. So they're not even curious about the person who doesn't live amongst them. So when I come home, nobody has a question because they won't know what to ask I still know their world. They don't have a clue about my own. And because I have everything they think I need nothing so they don't even have to [00:40:00] show up at the wedding. Because you won't even notice it because you have a whole life there in the big city. You're not the first person who leaves to the big city, and there's a whole fiction telling that story.

It's a literary genre, you know. And but here you are you put the word curious as the number 2. That too is legacy. The legacy is what you have and what you didn't have that you want to have.

Yeah, it's a it's a very simple question that actually drives rather deep. And so you cannot imagine that that will not be a part of the way of the way you work and what you choose to do and the projects that you think are meaningful.

Because we know there's something integrated inside of [00:41:00] us that, it's not visible, but it drives your sensibility. It drives what you think is important. It drives who you want to talk to. It drives how you manage the people you're with. It drives who you pick even if it's not the obvious reason at first, but when you start to look at the glue, that becomes a piece of the glue. You know, we don't take things for granted. We are not of the pretentious kind. We feel deeply responsible for the people that we hired. We don't feel like our moving on will be legitimate until they all have had the opportunity to move on as well.

And on and on like this. How is this by the way for you?

Speaker 1: It's good. A couple points have really resonated with me. I am really walking away from today with [00:42:00] a feeling that I need to be much more, I don't say cognizant or aware but acknowledge the risk you're taking in this that you talked about earlier starting off as a joke, and then really kind of becoming something that needs to be acknowledged, that I need to respect. And show appreciation and gratitude for. That was a blind spot that I had when I walked in here.

Speaker 2: But I did Pitch you on this, you know, like and I am walking into this...

Esther: Shhhh.

Speaker 2: Thank you.

Esther: That's right. And that's exactly what it needs. Nothing more. But you know, it's incredible because you're so used to doing it all yourself that you really, what you just demonstrated in this moment is how hard it is to receive.

Because if ever something was to happen I could see you come to me and say [00:43:00] this was such a big risk for me to trust him. How could he not see that? That will be the rupture point? So when he says it he's nailing it. And there's nothing to do but to just say he gets it. Of course because it's scary, because it upset even more the fact that you get it, this is in a paradoxical way, then you want to say but you look it's not really because I'm the one who convinced you brought this to you and then just go off into a blah blah which is part of it, but it's irrelevant because he actually knows the vulnerability point of this relationship, of this deal if you want. And you're right, it's exactly that that is the point. That's it. That's why I say should just because it [00:44:00] will trample it when you're actually saying the essential. So receive. Go ahead.

Speaker 2: Well thank you for acknowledging that, taking that away with you. I don't know I guess, I know that you are important to me, but I think this sort of signifies how important you are to me and I'm not sure that I had really registered that.

You know, we struggle to find a word to describe what we were and I think we kind of settled on you are my creative partner and and I want to live up, I want to live up to that. I want to be your creative partner, I want to be your equal and yeah you matter to me in a huge way and I absolutely do, I do trust you.

I don't have any hesitation on that. [00:45:00] At all,

Speaker 1: Thank you. And you have no idea how that makes me feel. Because I know it's a lot for you, and I know that we've worked hard to earn it.

Esther: And it would have been more common for you to also turn on each other and each one save your own skin.

Speaker 1: It happens yeah.

Esther: And the fact that you were able to protect your relationship in the face of that is very important.

Speaker 1: I think I was following, remember the advice I used to tell everybody that in five years, you won't remember half these people are involved in this but you will remember how you were and how you behaved and to always make sure you're honoring yourself and I think that we did that.

In five years we will look back and we'll remember very few details, but we [00:46:00] will remember how he felt during the time and how we acted and how we treated other people.

Esther: You want fire air or water or Earth.

Speaker 2: I want to burn it.

Speaker 1: I'm with the burn.

Esther: You're with the burn.

Speaker 2: There's something poetic about rising from the ashes too. I think that's our ritual

Esther: great.

Speaker 1: Yeah, so shall we start to throw this in here and say goodbye to this chapter of our life?

Speaker 2: I'm gonna burn this because this was a terrible memory.

Speaker 1: Oh my.

Speaker 1: God knows what toxic fumes are coming out of that card. Okay.

VO: Esther Perel is a best selling author, speaker and host of the podcast, Where Should We Begin? To learn more about Esther Perel's world, to sign up for her newsletter, or to apply to be on the podcast, go to EstherPerel.com/HowWork.

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